Fullers } Comment on Ruth; with two Sermons on speciall occasions.

also

His Triple Reconciler.

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TWO Sermons:

The first,

COMFORT IN CALAMITIE, teaching to Live well,

The other,

THE GRAND ASSIZES, minding to Dye well.

BY
THOMAS FULLER,
B. D.

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TO

The Right Worſhipfull, and deſervedly Honoured, the Lady ELIZABETH NEWTON, of CHARLETON in KENT.

MADAME,

Saint Paul *in the firſt to the* Theſſalonians, chap. 2. verſ. 18. *ſaith unto them*, I would have come unto you once and againe, but Satan hindred us. *I may make uſe of the former part of his Expreſſion, applying it to my frequent Intentions to viſit the Place of your Abode, and beſtow ſome Spirituall paines therein.*

But I must not play Satan *with* Satan, *be a false Accuser, to charge on him the frustrating of my Design, (though generally he be a* Back-Friend *to all good Desires) but must justly impute it to my owne manifold avocations.*

May your Ladyship now be pleased to see what you expected to heare, and reade what I intended to speake. The first of these Sermons was designed for your Fore-Noones, the latter for your After-Noones Repast.

I am confident you will not measure my respect to you to be the lesse, because the benefit to others may be the greater by publishing thereof; and request you to accept hereof, not as intended a full payment *for my many Obligations unto you, but as tendered*

red in consideration of your forbearance, *till I am enabled to expresse my Gratitude in a greater proportion.*

The Lord blesse you in your Selfe, *dayly sanctifying your rare naturall Endowments with his* choiseſt Graces; *blesse you in your* Selfe divided, *your* Worthy Husband; *in your* Selfe multiplyed, *your hopefull* Sonne; *and slowly, but surely, terminate your Prosperitie here with endlesse happinesse hereafter: The heartie desire of*

Your Ladyships
boundant Orator,

THOMAS FULLER.

Your Ladyships

humbleſt Servant

THOMAS FULLER.

COMFORT IN CALAMITIE.

A Sermon preached upon a speciall Occasion in S. *Clements* Church in *London*, neere *East-cheap*.

PSAL. 11. 3.

If the Foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous doe?

WE may observe, that *David* is much pleased with the Metaphor in frequent comparing himselfe to a Bird, and that of severall sorts: first, to an *Eagle*, *Psal.* 103. 5. *Thy youth is renewed like the Eagles*: Sometimes to an *Owle*,

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Pſal. 102. 6. *I am like an Owle in the Deſart*: Sometimes to a *Pelican*, in the ſame Verſe, *Like a Pelican in the Wilderneſſe*: Sometimes to a *Sparrow*, *Pſal.* 102. 7. *I watch, and am as a Sparrow*: Sometimes to a *Partridge*; *as when one doth hunt a Partridge.* I cannot ſay, that he doth compare himſelfe to a *Dove*, but he would compare himſelfe, *Pſal.* 55. 6. *Oh that I had the wings of a Dove, for then I would flee away, and be at reſt.*

Some will ſay, How is it poſſible, that Birds of ſo *different a feather* ſhould all ſo flye together, as to meet in the Character of *David*? To whom we anſwer, That no two men can more differ one from another, then the ſame ſervant of God at ſeverall times differeth from himſelfe. *David* in Proſperitie, when commanding, was like an *Eagle*; in Adverſitie, when contemned, like an *Owle*; in Devotion, when retired, like a *Pelican*; in Solitarineſſe, when having no companie, like a *Sparrow*; in Perſecution, when fearing too much companie [of *Saul*] like a *Partridge*.

This generall Metaphor of a *Bird*, which

David

David ſo often uſed on himſelfe, his enemies in the firſt Verſe of this Pſalme uſed on him, though not particularizing the kinde thereof: *Flee as a Bird to your Mountaine*; that is, *Speedily betake thy ſelfe to thy God, in whom thou hopeſt for ſuccour and ſecuritie.*

Queſt. Seeing this counſell was both *good in it ſelfe*, and *good at this time*, why doth *David* ſeem ſo angry and diſpleaſed thereat? Thoſe his words, *Why ſay you to my ſoule, Flee as a Bird to your Mountaine*, import ſome paſſion, at leaſtwiſe a diſguſt of the advice.

It is anſwered, *David* was not offended with the counſell, but with the manner of the propounding thereof. His enemies did it *Ironically*, in a gibing jeering way, as if his flying thither were to no purpoſe, and he unlikely to finde there the ſafetie he ſought for. How-ever, *David* was not hereby put out of conceit with the counſell, beginning this Pſalme with this his firme reſolution, *In the Lord put I my truſt, how ſay ye then to my ſoule, &c.*

Learne we from hence, when men give us good counſell in a jeering way, let us

take the counſell, and practiſe it, and leave them the jeere, to be puniſhed for it.

Indeed, Corporall Cordials may be invenomed, by being wrapt up in poyſoned Papers; not ſo good Spirituall Advice, where the good matter receives no infection from the ill manner of the deliverie thereof. Thus when the chiefe Prieſts mocked our Saviour, *Math.* 27. 43. *He truſted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him.* Chriſt truſted in God never a whit the leſſe for the ſleere and ſlout which their prophaneneſſe was pleaſed to beſtow upon him; Otherwiſe, if mens mocks ſhould make us to undervalue good counſell, we might in this Age be mocked out of *our God*, and *Chriſt*, and *Scripture*, and *Heaven*; the Apoſtle *Jude*, *verſe* 18. having fore-told, that *in the laſt times there ſhould be mockers, walking after their owne luſts.*

The next Verſe preſents an unequall Combat betwixt *armed Power, advantaged with Policie*, on the one ſide, and *naked Innocence* on the other.

Firſt, *Armed Power: They bend their Bowes,*

Bowes, and make readie their Arrowes, being all the *Artillerie* of that Age.

Secondly, *Advantaged with Policie: That they may privily ſhoot*, to ſurprize them with an ambuſh unawares, probably pretending amitie and friendſhip unto them.

Thirdly, *Naked Innocence:* If Innocence may be termed Naked, which is its owne Armour; *at the upright in heart.*

And now in due order ſucceedes my Text, which is an Anſwer to a tacite Objection which ſome may rayſe; namely, That the Righteous are wanting to themſelves, and by their owne *eaſineſſe* and *unactivitie*, (not daring and doing ſo much as they might and ought) betray themſelves to that bad condition. In whoſe defence *David* ſhewes, that if God in his wiſe will and pleaſure ſeeth it fitting, for Reaſons beſt known to himſelfe, to ſuffer Religion to be reduced to termes of extremitie, it is not placed in the power of the beſt man alive to remedie and redreſſe the ſame. *If the Foundations be deſtroyed, what can the Righteous doe?*

My Text is hung about with *Mourning*, as for a Funerall Sermon, and containes,

Firſt, A ſad Caſe ſuppoſed, *If the Foundations be deſtroyed.*

Secondly, A ſad Queſtion propounded, *What can the Righteous doe?*

Thirdly, A ſad Anſwer implyed; namely, They can doe juſt nothing, as to the point of re-eſtabliſhing the deſtroyed Foundation.

Note by the way, that in Scripture, when a Queſtion is propounded, and let fall againe, without any Anſwer returned thereunto, that it generally amounts to a Negative. Thus ſaith *Thamar*, 2 *Sam.* 13. 13. *And I, whither ſhall I cauſe my ſhame to goe?* that is, *Nowhither:* neither Citie, Court, or Countrey, will afford me any ſhelter to cover my ſhame, or recover my reputation. *Prov.* 18. 14. *But a wounded ſpirit who can beare?* that is, no meere man by his ſole ſelfe, without Gods gracious aſſiſtance. *Math.* 16. 26. *What is a man profited, if he ſhall gaine the whole world, and loſe his owne ſoule?* that is, nothing at all; when he caſteth up his *Audit*, he ſhall finde

finde himſelfe a great loſer by the bargaine. *If the Foundations be deſtroyed, what can the Righteous doe?* that is, they can doe juſt nothing; bemoane and bewayle they may; reſtore and re-build they cannot, what is ſo deſtroyed.

Before we goe any further, it will be worth our paines to enquire into the time and occaſion of this Pſalme. But here we are left at a loſſe, and cannot of our ſelves recover any certaintie, nor meet with others to direct us. The Title of the Pſalme is ſpeechleſſe, as to the date and occaſion thereof: Nor maketh it, with *Zachariah*, any ſignes when, or why compoſed; onely we may be confident, *David* made it when the *Church* was in ſome great affliction, and reduced to a dolefull condition.

For (under favour) I conceive, that the deſtroyed Foundations mentioned in the Text, relate not ſo properly to the *Civill State* as to the *Church* in *Iſrael*. Had this deſtruction been principally of *Temporall concernment*, *David* would have ſaid, What can the *valiant Champion*, or what can the *Politike Stateſ-man doe?* But ſeeing the Queſtion is confined to the *Righ-*

teous, it probably intimates, that the desolation complained of, concerned chiefely the Cause of the *Church*, *Religion*, and *Religious persons* therein.

If one may offer to make a modest conjecture, it is not improbable this Psalme might be composed on the *sad murther* of the *Priests* by *Saul*, 1 Sam. 22. 19. when after the slaughter of *Ahimelech* the High-Priest, *Doeg* the *Edomite* by command from *Saul*, *slew in one day foureſcore and five persons which wore a Linnen Ephod.* I am not so *carnall*, as to build the *Spirituall Church* of the *Jewes* on the materiall walls of the Priests Citie at *Nob*, (which then by *Doeg* was *smitten with the edge of the sword*) but this is most true, that *knowledge must preserve the people*, and *Mal.* 2. 7. *The Priests lips shall preserve knowledge*: and then it is easie to conclude, what an Earth-quake this Massacre might make in the *Foundations* of *Religion*.

There is some difference in the Translations, even as much as is betwixt the *Præter* and *Future Tense*.

The Old } Tran- } *What have the righteous done?*
The New } slation } *What can the righteous doe?*

We

We embrace the latter, as confident that those Worthy Translators were led thereunto by sufficient Reasons from the Originall, seeing *Sextinus Amama*, a learned Forrein Critick (but so long living in *Oxford*, that he perfectly understood the *English* Tongue) professeth that Translation was done *usque ad orbis invidiam*. And now we proceed to a Paraphrase upon the words of the Text.

If.

It is the onely word of Comfort in the Text, that what is said is not *Positive*, but *Suppositive*; not *Theticall*, but *Hypotheticall*. And yet this Comfort, which is but a *sparke*, (at which we would willingly kindle our hopes) is quickly sadded with a double Consideration.

First, Impossible Suppositions produce impossible Consequences. *As is the Mother so is the Daughter*. Therefore surely Gods holy Spirit would not suppose such a thing, but what was feasible, and possible, but what either had, did, or might come to passe.

Secondly,

Secondly, the *Hebrew* word is not the *Conditionall Im, ſi, ſi forte*, but *Chi, quia, quoniam*, becauſe, and (although here it be favourably rendred *If*) ſeemeth to import more therein, that the ſad Caſe had alreadie happened in *Davids* dayes.

I ſee therefore, that this *If*, our onely hope in the Text, is likely to prove with *Jobs* friends, but a *miſerable Comforter*. Well, it is good to know the worſt of things, that we may provide our ſelves accordingly: and therefore let us behold this dolefull Caſe, not as doubtfull, but as done; not as feared, but felt; not as ſuſpected, but at this time really come to paſſe.

The Foundations.

Poſitiones, the things formerly fixed, placed, and ſetled: It is not ſaid, if the Roofe be ruinous, or if the ſide Walls be ſhattered, but *If the Foundations.*

Fonndations be deſtroyed.

In the Plurall. Here I will not warrant my skill in Architecture, but conceive this

this may paſſe for an undoubted Truth: It is poſſible, that a Building ſetled on ſeverall intire *Foundations* (ſuppoſe them *pillars*) cloſe one to another, if one of them faile, yet the Structure may ſtill *ſtand*, or rather *hang*, (at the leaſt for a ſhort time) by vertue of the *Complicative*, which it receiveth from ſuch *Foundations* which ſtill ſtand ſecure. But in caſe there be a totall Rout, and an utter Ruine of all the *Foundations*, none can fancie to themſelves a poſſibilitie of that Buildings ſubſiſtence.

What can the Righteous?

That is, he that would be *Righteous*, that deſires it, that endeavours it, that in Gods acceptance through Chriſt, is interpreted to be *Righteous*. Otherwiſe, take the word in the high ſenſe and ſtrict acceptance thereof, for ſuch a one whoſe *Righteouſneſſe* is of proofe againſt Gods ſharpeſt and ſtrongeſt Juſtice, and then the Queſtion will not be, *What can the Righteous doe?* but, *Where can ſuch a Righteous man be found?*

What

What can the Righteous?

The *Righteous indefinitely*, equivalent to the *Righteous universally*; not onely the *Righteous* as a *single Arrow*, but in the whole *Sheafe*; not onely the *Righteous* in their *personall*, but in their *diffusive* capacitie. Were they all collected into one Body, were all the *Righteous* (living in the same Age wherein the *Foundations are destroyed*) summed up and modelled into one Corporation, all their joynt Endeavours would prove ineffectuall to the reestablishing of the fallen *Foundations*, as not being *mans worke*, but onely *Gods worke* to performe.

What Can *the Righteous?*

Know here, that the *Can* of the *Righteous* is a limited *Can*, confined to the Rule of Gods Word, they *can* doe nothing but what they *can* lawfully doe, 2 *Cor.* 13. 8. *For we* can *doe nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth: Illud possumus, quod jure possumus.* Wicked men can doe any things their

their Conſcience, which is ſo wide that it is none at all, will beare them out to act any thing how unlawfull ſoever, to Stab, Poyſon, Maſſacre, by any meanes, at any time, in any place, whoſoever ſtandeth betwixt them and the effecting their Deſires. Not ſo the *Righteous*; they have a Rule whereby to *walke*, which they will not, they muſt not, they dare not croſſe. If therefore a *Righteous* man were aſſured, that by the breach of one of Gods Commandements he might reſtore decayed Religion, and re-ſettle it *ſtatu quo prius*, his hands, head, and heart are tyed up, he *can* doe nothing, becauſe *their damnation is juſt who ſay*, Rom.3.8. *Let us doe evill that good may come thereof.*

Doe.

It is not ſaid, *What can they thinke?* It is a great Bleſſing which God hath allowed injured people, that though otherwiſe oppreſſed and ſtraitned, they may freely enlarge themſelves in their Thoughts. Surely, if Tyrants might have their will, as the *Perſian* King made a Law, *Dan.*6.7. That

That *none ſhould aske a Petition of any God, or man, ſave of* Darius, *for thirtie dayes*; ſo they would enact, That none ſhould thinke a good thought of any but of themſelves; and every Cogitation againſt their Proceedings ſhould be Actionable and Puniſhable.

But bleſſed be God, thoughts are free in the Courts and Conſiſtories of Man, be they never ſo bad; no *Informer* can accuſe them, no *Perſon* can indite them, no *Jurie* can be empanelled upon them, no *Judge* can condemn them, no *Sheriffe* can execute them. God hath made *Rehoboth*, he hath given roome, he hath allowed this liberty to his Servants, to ſpread forth their thoughts (as *Hezekiah* did *Sennacheribs* Letter, 2 *King.* 19. 14.) before the Lord the only ſearcher of hearts. *Thinke* they may; *But what can the Righteous doe?*

Doe.

It is not ſaid, What can the Righteous ſay? ſurely they could ſay ſomething if it might be heard, *Acts* 19. 39. ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ, In a lawful Aſſembly, four things con-

concurring to the making thereof.

1. A free place where's no feare of a forcible ſurpriſe.

2. A competent and convenient time to fit and furniſh themſelves to make their juſt defence; for Gods ordianry Servants dare not (for feare of tempting him) relie upon the extraordinary promiſe (proper to the times of the *Primitive* perſecution) *Matt.* 10. 19. *It ſhall be given you in the ſame hour what ye ſhall ſpeak:* No, now adayes, Gods beſt Saints pretend not ſo much *Spirit*, but that they muſt helpe themſelves by premeditation.

3. An unpartiall Judge, not one *Annias-like*, Acts 23. 2. which will command *Innocence* when beginning to plead, *to be ſmitten on the mouth.* Truth hath often ſought Corners, not as ſuſpecting her Cauſe, but as fearing ſuch Judges.

4. A ſilent, docible and unbyaſſed Auditory; not ſuch as come hither with full intent to carry away the ſame judgement (how erroneous ſoever) that they brought hither, miſreporting whatſoever makes againſt them.

If the Righteous in an Aſſembly thus con-

conſtituted, may be heard for themſelves, they could plead ſomething for their dear Clients the *deſtroyed Foundations*. Otherwiſe alas, what will it boot the *Larke* to plead for its life in the clawes of a *Kite*; what will it benefit a *Lamb* to traverſe his innocence in the pawes of a *Lyon*, where the foreſaid neceſſary requiſites to freedome cannot be obtained? But all they can ſay (*and give looſers leave to ſpeake*) though it might conduce much to the eaſing of their own, and perchance the convincing of their enemies hearts (if not over-hardned;) yet it contributes nothing to the *undeſtroying of the Foundations*, in which caſe, *What can the Righteous doe?*

Doe.

It is not ſaid, What can the Righteous ſuffer? This is the honour of Chriſtians, that when they cannot find Hands lawfully to Act, they will find Shoulders patiently to Beare. The ancient *Lutherans* before *Luther*, were called *Paterenians*, a word that will hardly be reconciled to good Latine, as being barbarous in the Gram-

Grammer and Extraction thereof. Yet I believe I may make it Latine ſooner then make it Engliſh; juſtifie the Etymologie of the word, ſooner then perſwade the the practice thereof, to make it free Deniſon of our Nation. They were ſuch people whoſe backs were *Anvils* for their Enemies *Hammer* to ſmite upon. We muſt not ſuffer the honour of *paſſive Obedience* herein to be dead and buried, at leaſt wiſe we muſt be mourners at the Funeral thereof. The Righteous can, will, and ſhall ſuffer much; but alas if the Foundations be deſtroyed, *What can the Righteous doe?*

But now we are met with a Giant *Objection*, which with *Goliah* muſt be removed, or elſe it will obſtruct our preſent proceedings.

Is it poſſible that the *Foundations* of *Religion* ſhould be deſtroyed? Can God be in ſo long a ſleep, yea, ſo long a Lethargie, as patiently to permit the Ruines thereof? If he looks on, and yet doth not ſee theſe *Foundations* when deſtroyed; where then is his *Omniſciency?* If he ſeeth it, and cannot helpe it; where

then is his *Omnipotency*? If he ſeeth it, can helpe it, and will not, where then is his *Goodneſſe* and *Mercy*? *Martha* ſaid to *Jeſus*, Joh. 11. 21. *Lord, if thou hadſt been here, my Brother had not dyed.* But many will ſay, Were God effectually preſent in the World with his aforeſaid Attributes, ſurely the *Foundations* had not *dyed*, had not been *deſtroyed*.

We anſwer Negatively, that it is impoſſible that the *Foundations* of Religion ſhould ever be *totally* and *finally deſtroyed*, either in relation to the *Church* in generall, or in reference to every true and lively *Member* thereof.

For the firſt, we have an expreſſe promiſe of Chriſt, *Math.* 16. 18. *The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevaile againſt it. Fundamenta tamen ſtant inconcuſſa Sionis.* And as for every particular Chriſtian, the ſecond of *Timothy*, 2. 19. *Nevertheleſſe, the Foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeale, the Lord knoweth them that are his.*

How-ever, though for the Reaſons afore-mentioned in the Objections, (the inconſiſtencie thereof with the Attributes

of

of Gods *Omnipotencie*, *Omniſciencie*, and *Goodneſſe*) the *Foundations* can never *totally* and *finally*, yet may they *partially* be *deſtroyed*, *quoad gradum*, in a foure-fold degree, as followeth.

Firſt, in the *deſires* and *utmoſt endeavours* of wicked men,

They bring their { 1. *Hoc velle*, 2. *Hoc agere*, 3. *Totum poſſe*.

If they *deſtroy* not the *Foundations*, it is no thanks to them, ſeeing all the World will beare them witneſſe they have done *their beſt*, (that is, *their worſt*) what their might and malice could performe.

Secondly, in their owne *vain-glorious imaginations:* They may not onely vainly boaſt, but alſo verily beleeve, that they have *deſtroyed* the *Foundations*. Applyable to this purpoſe, is that high *Rant* of the *Roman* Emperour, *Luke* 2. 1. *And it came to paſſe in thoſe dayes, that there went out a Decree from* Cæſar Auguſtus, *that all the world ſhould be taxed.* All the world! Whereas he had, though much, not all in *Europe*, little in *Aſia*, leſſe in *Africa*, none in *America*; which was ſo farre from be-

ing conquered, it was not ſo much as knowne to the *Romans*. But *Hyperbole* is not a Figure, but the ordinarie language of Pride: becauſe indeed *Auguſtus* had very much, he proclaimeth himſelfe to have all the world.

Thus no doubt *Herod*, *Math.* 2. was confident he had killed all the Infants in and about *Bethleem*, and ſo had ſped and diſpatcht the *Jewiſh King* amongſt the reſt, when he ſafely had eſcaped his furie.

Thus the perſecuting Emperours conceited themſelves to have deſtroyed all the *Bibles* in the world, whereof ſo many were ſurrendred up unto them by the hands of the *Traditores* (in plaine *Engliſh Traytors*) deputed by the Church to preſerve and keepe that Treaſure; and yet, bleſſed be God, a *Remnant* was left, from which the Chriſtians at this day have plentifully recruited themſelves. Thus Tyrants pleaſe themſelves, in reporting that they have *deſtroyed all the Foundations* of *Religion*, when haply unhappily they have partly ruinated ſome of them.

In ſuch a caſe, no wonder if *Fame* (the

Paraſite-

Paraſite-Generall of Greatneſſe) trumpets forth the *Triumphs* of Tyrants in the largeſt dimenſions. *Abſalom* is ſaid to have killed all the Kings ſonnes, 2 *Sam.* 13. 30. when indeed onely *Amnon* was ſlaine. Thus *Flatterie* will make the moſt of *Furies atchievements*, and by a *Synecdoche* of the whole for a part, all the *Foundations* ſhall be reported to be *deſtroyed.*

Thirdly, the *Foundations* may be *deſtroyed* as to all outward *viſible illuſtrious apparition.* The Church in Perſecution is like unto a Ship in a Tempeſt; downe goe all their Maſts, yea, ſometimes for the more ſpeed, they are forced to cut them downe: not a piece of Canvas to play with the Windes, no *Sayles* to be ſeene; they lye *cloſe notted* to the very *Keele*, that the *Tempeſt* may have the leſſe power upon them: though when the *Storme* is over, they can *hoiſe* up their *Sayles* as high, and ſpread their Canvas as broad as ever before. So the Church in time of Perſecution *feared*, but eſpecially *felt*, loſeth all *gayneſſe* and *gallantrie* which may attract and allure the eyes of beholders, and contenteth it ſelfe with its owne ſecrecie. In

a word, on the *Work-dayes* of *Affliction* she weareth her worst Clothes, whileſt her best are layd up in her *Wardrobe*, in sure and certaine hope that God will give her a *holy* and *happie Day*, when with joy she shall weare her best Garments.

Lastly, they may be *destroyed* in the *jealous apprehensions* of the best Saints and servants of God, especially in their Melancholy Fits: I will instance in no Punie, but in a Starre of the first magnitude and greatest eminencie, even *Elijah* himselfe complaining, 1 *Kings* 19.10. *And I, even I onely am left, and they seeke my life, to take it away.*

Where had *Elijah* lived? Did his *intelligence* or *intellectuals* deceive him, to be thus mistaken? His *intelligence!* So conversant with Gods servants, as to know none of them, but meerely to conceive, that the whole *species* of Gods people was conserved onely in his *individuall* selfe? Surely, the fault was rather in his *intellectuals*, and that onely for the present his *passion* at this time *imposed* on his *judgement*, and betrayed him to mistake. The cleareſt apprehension may loſe its way, in the

the midſt of exceſſive Joy, Love, Griefe, Feare, both the laſt meeting in *Elijah*. Stil God had ſeven thouſand hearts belonging to him, whoſe knees never bowed unto *Baal:* probably ſome of them might be knowne to *Elijah*, but for the preſent forgotten by him.

Whence we obſerve, firſt, that no *under-Officer* (ſuch as *Elijah* was) in the *Armie* of the *Church Militant*, knoweth the Liſt of all the Names of thoſe, who at the ſame Time, and in the ſame Place, *ſerve* therein, but onely God the *Generall*, and Chriſt the *Lieutenant-Generall* of the *Armie*.

Secondly, as *concealed Lands* belonged anciently to the King, ſo many a cloſe, ſecret, and unſuſpected Chriſtian (eſpecially in times of Perſecution) belongs onely to the God of Heaven.

But ſome will ſay, Why doth God ſuffer the *Foundations* to come ſo neere to be *deſtroyed?* Is it not at the beſt ſome diminution and abatement of his Goodneſſe? Why will he not prevent this *graduall deſtruction* of the *Foundations*, which ſo much grieveth the godly, and giveth occaſion to the wicked to triumph?

I anſwer, this is done for ſeverall Reaſons concealed in the Breſt and Boſome of Divine Providence, and for ſome Reaſons knowne and communicated to men; three whereof in humilitie and modeſtie are here preſented unto us.

Firſt, to give occaſion to Chriſtians to exerciſe their *Winter-Graces*; I count ſome *Summer-Graces* in their hearts, namely ſuch, the principall uſe whereof is in the time of their Proſperitie, as *Humilitie, Moderation, &c.* others are *Winter-Graces*, as *Patience, Contentment, &c.* I confeſſe, that *Thankefulneſſe* is ſeaſonable Summer and Winter, *Epheſ.* 5. 20 *Giving of thanks alwayes for all things:* like *Holly* and *Ivie*, greene all the yeare long, it is conſtantly in the prime thereof. How-ever, that the aforeſaid *Winter Graces*, and eſpecially *Patience may have her perfect worke*, James 1. 4. no whit *abortive* in the *time*, or *defective* in the *members* thereof, God in his wiſdome will permit that the *Foundations* may be *gradually deſtroyed*.

Secondly, God permitteth the enemies of Religion to atchieve ſuch a *deſtruction*, that plumped up with their own ſucceſſe, they

they may at the laſt be the *fuller* Sacrifice to his Juſtice. For as he feedeth himſelfe dayly on the puniſhment of leane and common Offenders, ſo his Juſtice ſometimes *taketh ſtate* to feaſt it ſelfe as King *Solomon*, 1 Kings 4. 23. *on fatted Fowle*, on men *larded* with *thriving* and *batling* in their owne villanies, *Pſal.* 119. 70. *Their heart is as fat as greaſe. Abel* offered to God, *Gen.* 4. 4. *of the fat of his Flock.* God in like manner ſometimes is delighted to offer to himſelfe the *fatteſt* Malefactors, fed in the Stall of ſucceeding wickedneſſe.

Thirdly, God permitteth the *Foundations* to be *deſtroyed*, becauſe he knowes he can *un-deſtroy* them; I meane re-build them in what minute and moment he pleaſeth himſelf. It is no Policie for men to ſuffer growing evils to encreaſe, becauſe ſuddenly they may ſtart paſt helpe and hope. Thus it is not good to dally with danger, and delay with Diſeaſes; *Venienti occurrite morbo*; it is no wiſdome for men to ſuffer a Houſe to run long to ruine, leſt it prove paſt repaire. But *nullum tempus occurrit Deo*, all times are equally

equally eaſie for God to recover his Right, and ſometimes are more for his Honour, namely, when he interpoſeth his Power to his greater Honour and Glory, in that ſeaſonable minute and moment, when men ſay it is *paſt hope*, and give up all for *deſperate*, yea, for *loſt* and *deſtroyed*.

Come we now to that Point which we conceive both pertinent to the Text, and profitable for our Times, namely, to give advice how people ſhould behave themſelves, if God ſhould for their ſinnes condemne them to live in a Time and Place wherein the *Foundations* of *Religion* (ſo farre as they are deſtroyable) ſhould be *deſtroyed*.

Be it here premiſed, that nothing herein is ſpoken out of reflection to the preſent Times, to fill the heads or hearts of people with Jealouſies of any Deſigne as if intended at the preſent to blow up the *Foundations* of *Religion*. And yet give me leave to ſay, that ſome moneths ſince had we gone on the *ſame pace* we began, a *few ſteps* farther would have brought all to a ſad Condition; ſo that the *Lawyers* might

might even have *drawne up the Will* of *expiring Divinitie*, and the *Divines* performed the *Funerals* of *dying Law* in this Nation. But bleſſed be God, that ſince that time *Confuſion is confounded*, and ſome hopes given of a better Condition. In a word, if *Religion* be no whit the neerer to the *making*, in all probabilitie it is ſomething the farther from the *undoing* thereof.

How-ever, grant *Religion* were in never ſo peaceable and proſperous an eſtate, yet the ſad *Subject* we now inſiſt on, could not be unſeaſonable. All Spirituall Meat is not to be bought up, and brought in, for our preſent ſpending and feeding thereon, but (as good Husbands) we are to powder up ſome for the time to come. And ſeeing none of us know what is to come, and all of us deſerve the worſt that may be, it will not be amiſſe to arme our ſelves with Counſels and Cautions, in caſe God ſhould give us to live in an Age wherein the *Foundations* are *deſtroyed*.

Firſt,

First, Enter *a Silent Proteſtation in the Court of Heaven, of thine owne Integritie, as to this particular, That thou haſt not willingly conſented to the deſtroying of the Foundations of Religion.*

I ſay, *Silent.*

IT is *Davids* counſell, *Pſal.* 4. 4. *Commune with your heart upon your Bed, and be ſtill.* There may be danger in making a *loud Proteſtation*; it may be interpreted, to be the *Trumpet to Sedition.*

Secondly, it may be quarrelled at, as taſting of the *Leven* of the *Phariſees*, which is *Hypocriſie*, for men to make a publique confeſſion of what may ſeeme to tend to the ſinfull prayſing (though indeed it be but the needfull purging) of themſelves.

A Silent Proteſtation.

Nothing more difficult, then in dangerous Times for Innocence it ſelfe to draw up

up a *Proteſtation* with all due Caution, ſo as to give her Adverſaries no advantage againſt her. If it be layd too low, the *Proteſtor* deſtroyes his owne innocence, and may be acceſſarie to the robbing himſelfe of his due, and ſo may die *Felo de ſe*, of his owne integritie. If it be drawne up too high, with *ſwelling expreſſions*, the *Proteſtor* may expoſe himſelfe to juſt Cenſure, as a *Libeller* againſt that Authoritie before which he entreth his *Proteſtation*. We cannot therefore be too warie and too cautious, in the making thereof, to obſerve the Golden Meane betwixt both extreames. For the better effecting whereof, we will weigh every word in the Counſell propounded.

In the Court of Heaven.

And that for a double Reaſon: Firſt, becauſe it is a *ſtanding Court*, no danger that it will ever be *put downe*: ſecondly, becauſe it is a *juſt Court*, no ſuſpition that any Corruption can ever prevaile therein.

Of

of thine owne Integritie.

He that hateth Suretiſhip is ſure, ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 11. 15. Breake not thy ſelfe, by undertaking more then what thou art able to performe. Man may have not onely a *charitable opinion* (due from us to all, of whom the contrarie doth not appeare) but alſo a *confident preſumption* of the goodneſſe of ſuch with whom they have had a long and intimate familiaritie. Yet all this amounts not to that certaintie, to embolden one to undertake a *Proteſtation* in their behalfe, which he ought to confine to himſelfe, of whom alone, and that ſcarcely too, (by reaſon of *the deceitfulneſſe of mans heart above meaſure*) he can have any competent aſſurance, *Thine owne Integritie.*

As to this particular.

Confeſſe thy ſelfe in other things a notorious ſinner, guiltie of ſinnes of Omiſſion, Commiſſion, Ignorance, Knowledge, Preſumption, Deſpaire, againſt God,

God, thy Neighbours, thy ſelfe, in thought, in word, in deed. We reade of the Daughters of *Zelophehad*, that they pleaded before *Moſes*, and gave this Character of their dead Father, *Numbers* 27. 3. *Our Father died in the Wilderneſſe, and he was not amongſt the aſſembly of them that were aſſembled againſt the Lord, in the companie of* Korah, *but died in his ſinne.* Meaning, that he was none of thoſe Mutineers, not eminently notorious for Rebellion; onely being a ſinfull man, as all are, he was mortall with the reſt of his kinde.

What a comfort will it be, if one can truly avouch it in his Conſcience to the ſearcher of hearts; Lord, I acknowledge my ſelfe a grievous ſinner, yet I appeale to thee, that I have not been active in the *deſtroying* of the *Foundations* of *Religion*, but oppoſed it as much as I might; and when I could doe no more, was a *Mourner* in *Sion* for the ſame?

That thou haſt not willingly conſented.

Where know to thy comfort, that God keepes

keepes a *Regiſter* in Heaven of all ſuch who doe, or doe not conſent to any wicked action: And if we may proſecute the Metaphor after the *manner of men*, we may ſay,

On the one ſide of the Booke are ſet downe the Names of ſuch who concurred and conſented to Wickedneſſe.	On the other ſide ſuch are recorded, who were on the *Negative*, and by their ſuffrages did diſſent from the ſame.

Thus we finde it written, to the eternall commendation of *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, *Luke* 23. 51. *He did not conſent to the counſell and deed of them* who betrayed our Saviour.

Not willingly.

Be it here obſerved, that mens Bodies may be forced to countenance that with their corporall preſence, which their Soules doth both reluctate at, and remonſtrate againſt. One eminent inſtance whereof we have, *Jerem.* 43. 5. For in the fore-

fore-going Chapter, *Johanan* the ſonne of *Kareah* came to *Jeremiah*, pretending deſire of advice from him, and promiſing to conforme himſelfe to his Counſell in that great Queſtion of importance, Whether he with the Remnant of *Iſrael* ſhould goe downe into *Ægypt*? *Jeremiah* diſſwades them from that Journey, as contrarie to the will of God, and threateneth them, in caſe they undertooke the ſame.

How-ever, we reade in the next Chapter, *verſe* 4. That this *Johanan*, the ſonne of *Kareah*, and all the *Captaines of the Forces*, were not content to carry downe the Remainder of the *Captivitie* into *Ægypt*, but alſo they tooke *Jeremiah* the Prophet, and *Baruch* the ſonne of *Neriah*, along with them, for the more credit of the matter, to weare them for a *countenance* of their wicked Deſigne. *Captaines of the Forces* indeed they were; and here they ſhewed a Caſt of their *Office*, violently to force two aged perſons, contrarie to their owne intentions and reſolutions.

Egregiam verò laudem & ſpolia ampla refertis.

Goe *Cowardly Tyrants*, erect *Trophies* to your owne *Victories*, make *Triumphs* of your owne *Valour*: A great matter of *Manhood*, a *Noble Conqueſt*, to compell poore *Jeremiah* the Prophet, and painfull *Baruch* his Scribe (each of them by proportionable computation, above ſixtie yeares of age) to returne into *Ægypt*, whileſt their *Mindes*, with a contrarie motion to their *Bodies*, went back to (or rather never removed from) the Land of *Iſrael*. An eminent Inſtance, that mens Bodies may ſometimes be forced to doe that which their Soules doe deteſt.

Secondly, we except ſuch (from *willing conſenting*) as have been fraudulently circumvented inſtrumentally to concurre to the *deſtroying* of *Foundations*, cleane contrarie to their owne deſires and intents, as erroneouſly conceiving they ſupported the *Foundations*, when really they *deſtroyed* them. This commonly commeth to paſſe, by *having mens perſons in admiration*, Jude 16. So that poſſeſſed with the opinion of their Pietie, they deliver up their Judgements as their *Act and Deed*, ſigned and ſealed to them, to beleeve

leeve and practice, without denyall, doubt, or delay, whatsoever the others shall prescribe. Yet, upon the confession of the faults of such seduced people, God will forgive them, taking off the Load from them, and laying it upon their seducers, pittying those innocents who charitably counted others better then they were, and punishing such hypocrites who really were worse then they seemed.

We reade, *Deut.* 21. 1. If a man *be found slaine in the Land, lying in the field, and it be not knowne who slew him*; the *Elders* of the next Citie what should they doe? (It is not said, they should all meet together, and lay their hands on the dead Corps, and it should bleed when the *Murtherer* approached unto it. This sometimes happeneth, but is not (especially alone) to be relyed on; scarce a Presumption, no Demonstration.) But after the offering of a solemne Sacrifice, these words were to be pronounced by them: *Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seene it. Be mercifull, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people*

of Iſraels charge, and the blood ſhall be forgiven them. In like manner we are confident, that God in his goodneſſe will remit their guilt (on their prayers, and pleading the Merits of Chriſt ſacrificed) which meerely have been *drawne in* inſtrumentally to *deſtroy* the *Foundations*, and have not willingly, wittily, or wilfully had a hand in the killing thereof.

Secondly, *Keepe up the deſtroyed Foundations in thine owne Houſe.*

It was a worthy Reſolution of *Joſhuahs*, Joſh. 24. 15. *But as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.*

Some will ſay, What is meant here by *Houſe?*

I anſwer; the fourth Commandement, *Exod.* 20. 10. will expound it: *Thou, and thy Sonne, and thy Daughter, thy Man-ſervant, and thy Maid-ſervant,* (*Cattell* being irrationall, belong not hereunto) *and the ſtranger that is within thy gates. Stranger?* He that partakes under the Rooſe of thy Protection, muſt ſubmit to the Rule of thy Devotion.

It

It may be objected, Why no mention of the Wife herein?

It is answered, The Wife is part of the Husband, comprized in him, as a parcell of *Thou*. *Gen.* 1. 27. *So God created Man in his owne Image, in the Image of God created he Him, male and female created he Them.* Why *Him* and *Them?* Why is the Number altered? It is a sad Family, wherein this Doubt is not dayly cleared. Man and Wife (though plurall in persons) are in affection *one flesh*; and being but *one*, good reason why the *Result* of them *both* should be stiled *Him*, and not *Her*, denominated from the more Noble Gender.

But to returne to *Joshua* and his worthy Resolution, *I and my House will serve the Lord*; namely, Himselfe, his Wife, his Children, his Servants: Surely, he had all these his Relations, and all these his Relations had reall Pietie in them, at leastwise they seemingly pretended it, and *Joshua* charitably beleeved it: yet I confesse we meet not in Scripture with any of their Names; whereas we heare often of *Judas* in the Gospel, and dayly of *Pon-*

tius Pilate in the Creed. How farre better is it to have our Names written, *Philippians* 4. 3. *in the Booke of Life*, then to be but barely recorded in the outward letter of the Scripture!

Thirdly, *If thou canſt not keepe it up in thine owne Houſe, keepe it up in thine owne Chamber.*

It is ſaid, *Nehemiah* 3. 30. wherein ſeverall perſons re-edified the walls of *Jeruſalem, after him repaired* Meſhullam, *the ſonne of* Berechiah, *over-againſt his Chamber.* It is probable, that this *Meſhullam* was no *Houſe-keeper*, but onely a *Lodger*; yet repairing his part, facilitated the whole. Let every owne endeavour at leaſtwiſe to *keepe up the Foundations in his owne Chamber*, betwixt *himſelfe* and *other* ſelfe.

Fourthly, *If thou canſt not keepe it up in thine owne Chamber, keepe it up in thine owne Conſcience.*

The Prophets Counſell muſt be practiſed,

ſed, *Micah* 7. 5. *Truſt ye not in a Friend, put ye not confidence in a Guide, keepe the doores of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy Boſome.*

Fifthly, *Remember the dayes of Gods Right Hand, and feede upon the comfortable memorie of what is paſt.*

He that hath not hot Meat to feede upon, may make cold Meat, well heat, wholeſome nouriſhment: If the preſent Times afford us not contentment, let us with comfort ruminate on thoſe dayes of Gods *Right Hand*; namely, wherein he hath vigorouſly and effectually diſcovered himſelfe for his owne Honour and his peoples Comfort. *Pſal.* 77. 1. *I will remember the yeares of the Right Hand of the moſt High: David* being then in an Agonie, and readie to deſpaire.

Sixthly, *Pray heartily and truſt faithfully in the Power and Providence of the God of Heaven.*

Here it will not be amiſſe to inſert a

memorable Storie, applyable to our occasion.

There were at the same time two Princes in *Germanie*, neighbouring in their Dominions, and of the same Name, though much different in their Power and Puissance; namely,

Frederick, Duke of *Saxonie*, of the greatest Command of any next the Emperour.	*Frederick*, Bishop of *Magdenburgh* (inferior to few *Prelates* in *Germanie*) but utterly unable, without his apparent ruine, to contest with the foresaid *Duke*.

Now, as *Luther* in his Comment on the 228 Psalme, briefely summeth up the matter to this effect:

The Duke pretended a Title to some Townes in the Bishops possession, denounced Warre against him next Spring, in case Restitution was not made before that time. Withall he sent a secret Agent to marke the Bishops motions, and what preparations he made for his defence.

The Agent cunningly wrought himselfe into the Bishops acquaintance, and wondring

wondring to ſee him make no Warlike Proviſion againſt the time appointed, preſumed at laſt to enquire of him the reaſon of ſo great neglect.

The Biſhop returned this Anſwer, That he never intended any Martiall reſiſtance, counting it madneſſe to fight againſt him, where's no human probability to conquer; Muſtering of men in this caſe, was but caſting away ſo many into the Gaghs of Death. This he was reſolved on, to Pray, to Preach, to viſit the Churches in his Dioces, leaving the event of all to God, to defend the innocencie in his Cauſe.

Politicians, I know, will cenſure his Deſigne as ſilly and weake, which others will behold under a better notion of honeſt and pious: ſure I am, it is moſt applyable to our purpoſe. When the godly ſadly behold the *Foundations* of *Religion deſtroyed*, (ſo farre forth as they are deſtroyable) they make no proviſion of themſelves to ſet them up againe, as ſufficiently aſſured it is paſt their *power*, above their *ſtrength*, it *will coſt more, ſo that they muſt let it alone for ever.* Onely this they doe, they will faithfully, and fervently,

and

and constantly pray to God, (whose Glory is concerned in the Cause as much, and more then their Good) in his owne due time to worke out his owne Honour, and settle the *Foundations* on their true *Basis* againe.

Lastly, *Reflect with Comfort upon the words that follow my Text, wherein there is crowded as much Consolation, as the scantling of so few words can receive,* Verse 4. *The Lord is in his holy Temple.*

The Lord.

Notwithstanding all these Distempers and Disasters, God is not *un-Lorded*: He is not degraded from his Dignitie, but remaineth still in full Possession, and Power, what he was before.

The Lord is.

Say not, *he was*, which all must confesse; or *will be*, which the godly doe hope: but the *Lord IS* in *actuall being*. But, *where is He*, say some? Surely, in some meane

and

and obſcure place, where he maintaineth no *Majeſtie* or *Magnificence*. O no; He is in his *Temple*, the eminent place of his Reſidence. But this his *Temple* is prophaned and unhallowed, levelled in the Dignitie thereof to ordinarie places. Indeed, if ſome men might have their will, it ſhould be ſo: but *He* is in his *holy Temple*. In a word, God is not *un-Lorded*, this *Lord* is not *un-Templed*, this his *Temple* is not unhallowed; and notwithſtanding all wicked mens endeavours to *deſtroy* the *Foundations*, the *Lord is in his holy Temple*.

FINIS.

THE GRAND ASSIZES.

A Sermon preached at Saint *Maries* in *Cambridge.*

REVEL. 20. 12.

And the Bookes were opened.

THere is not in all the *Scripture* a more lively repreſentation of the laſt Judgement, then in this and the paralel Chapter of the *Propheſie* of *Daniel:* Foure grand Obſervables preſent themſelves therein.

Firſt, *Verſe* 11. *I ſaw a great white Throne: Throne*, there is *Majeſtie*; *Great*, there is *Magnificence*; *White*, there is *Integritie*;

Integritie; no spot of Injustice, no sparke of Partialitie shall staine the Puritie of that Dayes Proceedings. God grant, that this *Throne*, *White* in it selfe, and *White* in relation to him that sitteth thereon, may prove *White* to us, that our innocencie thereat in Christ may be cleared, and our soules with joy comforted and compleated. Otherwise, though the *Throne* be *White*, the *Day* will prove to *guiltie Offenders*, as it is described, *Ioel* 2.2. *A Day of Darknesse, and of Gloominesse, a Day of Clouds, and of thick Darknesse.*

Secondly, *The Earth and the Heaven fled away from his face that sat on the Throne*: Wherein had the harmlesse Heaven and innocent Earth offended, that should cause the flight? What if the *Heathen* had superstitiously worshipped the *Hoast* of *Heaven*? the Heavens purely passive therein had never consented thereunto. What if the *Earth* had brought forth *Thornes* and *Thistles*? she did it not willingly, but cursed and commanded by God, *Gen.* 3.18. so to doe. Alas, both *Heaven* and *Earth* were conscious to themselves of comparative impuritie,

puritie, and fled like *Droſs* from his *Face* who is *a conſuming fire.* See here how poorely the *wicked* are helped, when they Petition the *Mountaines to fall upon them and cover them. Fall upon them*; that is Improbable. *Cover them*; that is Impoſſible. Ill are the Mountaines able to protect them, when the whole Earth cannot defend it ſelfe: cannot make good it's own Station, but flyeth away.

Thirdly, *John* ſaw the *Deaa, Small and Great ſtand before God.* Here the extreames, *Small and Great*, are expreſſed, whileſt thoſe of middle ſeized condition betwixt them are implyed. Mens *Nets* commonly are ſo caſt, the great Fiſhes break through the Threads, and little Fiſhes creep through the holes; whileſt Gods *Drag-net* is ſo large, ſo ſtrong, ſo advantagiouſly caſt, neither Great nor Small can eſcape it. *I ſaw the Dead, Small and Great.*

But why is there here no mention of the Living? our *Creed*, according the *Analogie of Faith*, teaching us that God ſhall *judge the Quick and the Dead.*

I Anſwer, S. *John* onely took notice of them

them who were most *numerous*, and that which was most *miraculous*. Most *numerous*, the living at the last day being inconsiderable in number to the dead, as being onely the *product* of one *Generation*. Most *Miraculous*. It is usuall and ordinary to see the living arraigned everie *Assizes* and *Sessions*; but for the Dead to appeare before the Judges, is most strange, and therefore onely noted by the *Apostle*.

The Fourth Observable in the words of my Text; *And the Bookes were opened.*

We read of *King William*, called the *Conqueror*, that he caused a *Survey-Booke* to be made of all the *Demesne Lands* in *England*, which he no lesse proudly and prophanely then falsly termed *Doomesday-Booke*; yet was not the same unpartially performed, some Lands being rated above, and others beneath the true value thereof. Behold here the true Doomsday Bookes, done without feare or favour, wherein all mens actions were unpartially recorded; *And the Bookes were opened.*

The

The words are a *Metaphor* borrowed, ſay ſome, from *Mercatorie tranſactions* betwixt *Buyer* and *Seller*, where the *Debts* are *Booked*: taken, ſay others, from *Judiciall Proceedings*, where the *Indictments* of *Malefactors* are written and read before the *Judge*; and this beares beſt proportion with the *Context*. *Joh. Mariton.*

Take notice herein of the low condeſcention of the high God of Heaven, ſpeaking *after the manner of men*. Should God ſpeake of himſelfe as he is, his expreſſions would be as incomprehenſible as his *Eſſence*. What then is to be done in this caſe, to make man capable of Gods diſcourſe? Either man muſt be mounted up to Heaven, a perfection in this Life unattainable, or God of his goodneſſe may be pleaſed to ſtoope unto Earth, which by him is graciouſly performed. Let us not therefore thinke the lower of his *Greatneſſe*, but the higher of his *Goodneſſe*. Let no *Preachers* count it a *diminution* to their *Learning*, a *degrading* to their *Language*, to humble themſelves to the Capacities of their *Auditories*, having ſo good a *Precedent*: *God the Father*, as I may

ſay, *incarnating* himſelfe in his *humane expreſſions:* And let people liſten the more attentively to Gods language herein. When the *Jewes* heard, *Acts* 22. 2. that S. *Paul ſpake in the Hebrew* (that is, in their owne) *Tongue unto them, they kept the more ſilence:* Seeing God deſcends to our *Dialect*, let us attend with the more earneſtneſſe to what is ſpoken; *And the Bookes were opened.*

All *Metaphors* in *Scriptures* muſt tenderly be toucht, leſt (*as the wringing of the Noſe bringeth forth blood*) they be tortured to ſpeake beyond and againſt their true intention. But *Metaphors* from Gods mouth, ſpeaking ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, muſt be handled with much moderation, leſt in the proſecution thereof we come into the *ſuburbs* of *Blaſphemie.* Where *Diſcretion* adviſeth us to be cautious in others, *Devotion* commands us to be timorous in following ſuch *Metaphors.* How-ever, we may ſafely tread in the ſteps of the *Scripture*, and uſe ſuch phraſes as we finde therein.

In the words we may obſerve five *Doctrines*; all which, like the Linkes

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in a Chayne, depend one upon another.

First, *God writes downe and records all actions of men on Earth.*

Secondly, *Actions thus written are not trusted in loose Papers, but bound up.*

Thirdly, *Actions thus bound up, amount not onely to one, but make many Bookes.*

Fourthly, *Bookes thus made are not presently opened, but for a time kept secret and concealed.*

Fifthly, *Bookes thus concealed shall not be concealed for ever, but in due time shall be opened.*

I intend not a particular prosecution of all these *parts*; onely I will make a *Decoction* of them all, so to make them more *Cordiall* into one *Staple Doctrine*, when first we have explained something necessarie thereunto.

God his writing downe of the actions of Earth, proceedeth not from his want of Memorie, as if he intended to make use of his Notes for the benefit thereof. There be two expressions like in sound, yet so different in sense, that applyed to God, the one importeth *Blasphemie*, the

other *ſound Divinitie*, namely, *Ancient*, and *Old*. God is termed in *Daniel*, *The Ancient of Dayes*, expreſſing his everlaſting continuance from all Eternitie: But *Old* he cannot be termed, as appropriated to *Creatures*, (*they wax old, as doth a Garment*) and carrying in it more then an intimation of impairing and decay. God hath all the perfections of Age, *Knowledge*, *Gravitie*, *Wiſdome*, without the infirmities thereof, *Weakneſſe*, *Frowardneſſe*, *Forgetfulneſſe*.

Wherefore he reciteth downe mens Actions, not out of any neceſſitie to helpe himſelfe to remember them, but partly out of *State*, (as *Joſeph* made uſe of an *Interpreter*, though underſtanding his Brothers language) partly, that the producing the ſame in Evidence at the *Laſt Day*, may ſilence and confound the more impudent *Malefactor*.

Theſe Actions thus written, amount to many *Bookes*, and we finde ſeven ſeverall *Bookes* mentioned in the *Scripture*.

Firſt, the *Booke of Life*, whereof frequent mention in Gods Word, *Phil.* 4. 3. *Whoſe Names are in the Booke of Life*. This containeth

containeth a *Regiſter* of ſuch particular perſons, in whoſe ſalvation God from all Eternitie determined to have his mercie glorified, and for whom Chriſt merited *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Perſeverance*, that they ſhould *repent*, *beleeve*, and be finally *ſaved*.

Secondly, the *Booke of Nature*. This mentioned by *David*, Pſal. 139. 16. *Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance, yet being unperfect, and in thy Booke all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.*

Thirdly, the *Booke of Scripture*, and here behold it; and happie were it for us, could we but as zealouſly practice it in our *hearts*, as we can eaſily hold it in our *hands*.

Fourthly, the *Booke of Providence*, wherein all particulars are regiſtred, even ſuch which *Atheiſts* may count trivtall and inconſiderable, *Math.* 10. 30. *But the very haires of your head are all numbred*: And where is their number ſummed up? Even in the *Booke of Gods Providence*.

Fifthly, the *Booke of Conscience.* This Booke is Gods, as the *true Owner* and *Proprietarie* thereof; yet so, as he lendeth it to man in this Life, to make use thereof.

Sixthly, the *Booke of mens Actions.* Hence that frequent expression in Scripture, *Psalme* 51. 9. *And blot out all mine iniquities:* intimating, that all our ill deeds are fairely written, til God in Christ doth crosse or delete them. And if our ill deeds be registred, surely our good deeds be recorded; God not being like those *envious* and *ill-natured persons*; who onely take notice of what is bad, passe by and neglect what is good in another.

Seventhly, the *Booke of mens Afflictions.* Some account this onely a distinct *Tome*, or *Volume*, of the *former Booke*; others, an intire *Booke* of it selfe, *Psal.* 56. 8. *Thou tellest my flittings, put my teares into thy Bottle; are not all these things written in thy Booke?* And if the *white teares* of *Gods servants* be *botled up*, surely the *red teares* are not *cast away*; but their *innocent blood* causelesly shed, shal (though slowly)

slowly) yet surely and severely be punished on the causers thereof.

These *Bookes* are for a time concealed, and not opened till the *Day of Judgement*. First, because some of them are not finished and compleated till that time; *Finis* is not as yet affixed unto them: and it is absurd, that a *Booke* should be published before it is perfected. The generations of mankind continuing till the *Day of Judgement*, such *Volumes* as concerne the *Quick at that Day*, are not ended till *that Day*. Secondly, God conceales them for a while, untill the *Day of Judgement*, that then his owne Honour may be the more advanced, and his enemies the more confounded at the unexpected opening of these *Bookes*.

The maine *Doctrine* is this: *All men must at the Last Day be tryed, so as to be saved or condemned by the Bookes.* The truth hereof will appeare, by an induction of all mankind, which fall under a generall Division of *Pagans* and *Christians*.

Be it here premised, That all Mortalitie shall be tryed by one of these two

Statutes, either the *Statute of Infidelitie*, or the *Statute of Unconscionablenesse*. The former we have set downe, *Marke* 16.16. *He that beleeveth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that beleeveth not, shall be damned.* By this *Statute* shall no *Heathen* man be tryed, because God is not so austere, (how-ever others may accuse him) *to reape where he did never sowe. Invincible Ignorance* shall so farre excuse them, that it shall never be charged on their Account, that they never beleeved, who never had the meanes conducing thereunto.

The second *Statute*, is the *Statute of Unconscionablenesse*, expressed *Romans* 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles, who have not the Law, doe by nature the things contained in the Law, these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves. Which shew the workes of the Law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witnesse, and their thoughts the meane while accusing or else excusing one another.* Now by this *Statute* shall all *Heathen* be tryed, that they have been wanting to that light of Nature bestowed upon them.

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In proofe whereof, we divide the *Heathen* into *Heathen Heathen*, and *Civilized Heathen*. By the former we understand those *pure-impure Pagans*, who are meerly wilde, without any Art or Learning, to cultivate or instruct them. The *Southerne point* of *Africa* is knowne to Mariners passing thereby, by the Name of the *Cape of Good Hope*, which in relation to the *Natives* inhabiting thereabouts, may more truly be termed the *Cape of sad Despaire*; for they are but one *Degree*, or *Remove*, from *brute beasts*. Yet even these have more *Light* then they have *Heat*, and their *Naturall Understanding* dictates unto them many *cleare* and *straight Rules*, from which their *darke* and *crooked practice* doth swerve and decline. For although the *Morall Law* may be said to be written in them, (to use the *phrase* of a *Critick*) *literis fugientibus*, in *dull* and *dimme Characters*; partly, because in a great measure obliterated at the first by Originall Corruption, at the Fall of *Adam*; partly, because defaced since, and fretted out with the Rust and Canker of *Barbarisme*, (contracted by long Custome in

severall

severall degenerating Generations:) Yet still so much of the *Morall Law* remaines legible in their hearts, as may convince their practice to be contrarie thereunto. In a word, though they come farre short of other refined *Heathen* in knowledge, yet their knowledge (as little as it is) goeth farre beyond their performances: so that justly they may be condemned, when *the Bookes are opened*, on the *Statute* of *Unconscionablenesse*.

Civilized Pagans succeed; such, who by Art and Education (as anciently the *Grecians* and *Romans*, and at this day the *Persians* and *Chinois*) have scoured over the dimme inscription of the *Morall Law*, that it appeareth plaine unto them. Such were *Socrates* the *Pagan Martyr*, (put to death for asserting one God) *Diogenes* the *Heathen Hermite*; *Plato*, their *Moses*, who saw the *back parts* of God in the Doctrine of his *Idæa's*; *Regulus*, their *Abraham*, so famous for his Faith (though but a *Morall* one) kept with the *Carthaginians*; *Titus Vespasian*, their *Josiah*, who wept at the consideration of the sinnes of the *Jewes*, and Gods severitie at the sack-

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ing of the Temple in *Jerusalem*. Verily I say unto you, I have not found so much civill performance, no, not amongst many professing themselves to be Christians: Such *wise Soveraignes*, such *loyall Subjects*; such *valiant Generalls*, such *worthie Souldiers*; such *loving Husbands*, such *dutifull Wives*; such *provident Parents*, such *obedient Children*; such *equall Masters*, such *faithfull Servants*; such *constant Friends*, such *courteous Neighbours*; that they discharged all *Morall Relations*, to the admiration, yea, envie of all Beholders.

Yet even the best of these, in the strictnesse of Gods Justice, may be condemned when *the Bookes are opened*. For, grant that in some particular actions they may be said morally to supererogate, even over-doing in goodnesse what was required at their hands, yet in other things they were defective, and fell short of the just measure of Gods Commands, according to the *Morall Light* manifested unto them. That servant doth not his Masters will, who being commanded to shut all the doores in the house, doth latch, bolt, lock,

lock, barre, and barricado up one or two of them, leaving the rest standing open. So, though some of these *Heathens* may seeme in some particular acts to surpasse themselves, and to be better then the Law enjoyneth them, yet in other things they were deficient, and justly condemnable for the same, seeing Gods finall Sentence shall be passed, not according to some eminent performance of persons, but according to the constant drift, scope, purpose, and tenour of their conversations.

Besides, some grand Vices (though not so visible to humane eyes) infected the transcendiaries of their highest atchievements.

First, *Vaine-glory*, and *Popular Applause*, the *Pole-Starres* by which they steered all their actions. Had *Pride* been the Weapon whereat a *Duel* had been fought betwixt *Alexander* and *Diogenes*, probably the Conqueror of the World had been worsted by a poore Philosopher.

Secondly, *Hypocrisie* set a *Tincture* and *Dye* on all their Actions. Who hath more

golden

golden Sentences then *Seneca* againſt the Contempt of Gold? Yet (if *Tacitus* and other of his *Contemporaries* may be credited) none more *Rich*, none more *Covetous* then he; as if out of Deſigne he had perſwaded others to caſt away their Money, that he himſelfe might come and gather it up againe.

Thus theſe *Heathens*, for ought we can finde in *Scripture*, are left in a *damnable*, but farre be it from me to ſay, in a *damned condition*. When men of my *Profeſſion* were formerly admitted into the *Commiſſion of the Peace*, it was faſhionable for them to goe off the *Bench* at the *Aſſizes*, after the *Jurie* had *Caſt*, and before the *Judge* did pronounce the *Sentence* of *Condemnation* on *Malefactors*: To ſhew, that we of the *Clergie* ought to be *Men of Mercie*, taking no delight in the ſad, though neceſſarie part of *Punitive Juſtice*.

Give me leave ſo farre to remember this *ancient Cuſtome*, that I may make an improvement thereof for the preſent occaſion. We finde theſe *Heathen* men *Caſt* by the *Verdict* of the *Scriptures*, let my

Sermon

Sermon therefore depart in silence, and proceed no further in this Point, as to any determining of their *finall condition.*

When *Haman*, *Esther* 7.8. fell into the displeasure of King *Ahasuerus*, it is said, *they covered his face*, as of a man that lost himselfe at Court, and no *pleasing spectacle* for others to behold; it being a ghastly sight to looke on a (though *living man*, yet) *dying*, yea, *dead favourite.* Let us *cover the faces* of these *Heathen* men, as from any further discoursing of their *condition*, whose *sad Case* may thus briefely be drawne up, *They are left under the Wrath of God, and weight of their sinne, and without any ordinarie way to a Saviour.*

I say, *ordinarie.* I confesse it is a *Gospel-Truth*, That in the *Name of Jesus* onely Salvation is to be expected; and it is a *Maxime* no lesse sound then generally received, *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*, *Out of Gods Church no hope to be saved*; if both be confined to *common Dispensations*, and the regular knowne way of Gods manifesting of himselfe. But how farre forth it might please God to reveale *Christ* to such

such *Heathens* on their *Death-beds*, by peculiar favour, out of the Rode of his *common kindnesse*, and how farre forth God, as an *Universall Creator*, may be pleased to indulge unto some eminent *Heathen persons*, is curious for man to enquire, and impossible to determine. Leave we them therefore to stand, or fall, to their owne *Master*; onely adding this, That it will be farre better at the *Last Day of Judgement* for these *Christian Pagans*, as I may terme them, then for many *Pagan Christians* amongst us now-adayes, who are worse under the *Sunne-shine* of *Grace* in the Gospel, then they by the *dimme Candle-light* of *Nature*.

Come we now to *Christians*; where the difficultie is the lesse to prove, that they all shall be *arraigned*, and may justly be *condemned*, when the *Bookes are opened*: which will plainely appeare on the serious perusall of the following particulars.

First, That to all persons living within the *Pale* of the *Church*, Christ hath really and cordially, *sine fuco & dolo*, without any fraud or deceit, been tendred unto them,

them, under the Conditions of Faith and Repentance, *That whosoever beleeveth on him should have everlasting life:* And this will appeare *when the Bookes shall be opened.*

Secondly, that even the worst of men living under the *Light* of the *Gospel* have at one time or another their heads filled with good notions, and their hearts with good motions; Grace illuminating, wooing, and courting them, as I may say, to lay hold on God in his Promises: on the truth whereof, their owne Consciences will be deposed; and so this will appeare *when the Bookes are opened.*

Thirdly, that God standeth readie, on mans good improvement of the aforesaid *illuminating Grace*, (though not for the merit of mans performances, but for his owne meere mercie and promise sake) to Crowne their Endeavours with the addition and accession of farther *degrees of Grace*, even such as infallibly *accompanie salvation.* For I shall never be of their Opinions, who parallel Gods proceedings with those of *Adonibezek*, Judg. 1.7. who put *seventie Kings* under his *Table*, there-

to

to gather up *Crummes*, which probably did very plentifully fall down unto them; whereas he before-hand had taken order that their *Thumbes* were cut off: Their *Thumbes* I say, which alone of all the fingers are of the *Quorum*, to the gathering or grasping of any thing; and whose *effectuall correspondencie* with the rest of the Hand, is absolutely necessarie to the taking up of any small thing, especially if lying *in plano*, on a *Floore*, or *flat place*. I say, I must dissent from those who make God such a *Tyrant*, as sportingly and spightfully to proffer *Grace* to wicked men, when by a *previous act*, without any fault or refusall of theirs, he hath rendred them incapable of the acceptance of that which he offereth unto them. No surely, God doth no way before-hand maime or disable them from enjoying the *benefit* of *Grace* tendred unto them; but on the other side, is prepared to encrease their store, and adde to them, which use the utmost of their power to encrease those *Talents* which they have alreadie received. And this will appeare to be true, *when the bookes shall be opened.*

Fourthly, No man hath made that improvement of *Grace offered* which he ought, and might. Many a time he hath ſtayed at home, when he ſhould have been at *Church*: Many times he hath been at *Church* either ſleeping, or not attending there: many a time he hath attended, yet afterwards forgotten what he heard: many times he hath remembred it, and it hath been his *Remembrancer*, yet he hath quenched the *heat* in his *Heart*, and *Light* in his *Underſtanding*. And all this will appeare true, *when the Bookes ſhall be opened.*

Fifthly, Upon our not improving Gods *Grace* offered us in his *Word*, God *qui non deſerit niſi deſeratur*, who leaves none unleſſe he be firſt left by them, is not bound to adde more *Grace*: yea, he may juſtly withdraw what he hath given; and which is more, may judicially harden thoſe from whom his *Grace* is withdrawne, for making no better uſe thereof when tendred unto them. And all this ſhall appear, *when the Bookes ſhall be opened.*

In a word, the tranſactions of that *Day* will be a perfect *Comment* on thoſe words

of

of the Prophet *Hoſea* 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelfe, but in me is thine helpe.* All ſuch who are condemned, ſhall caſt the blame thereof on themſelves; whileſt thoſe whom God ſhall be pleaſed to ſave, will in their Conſciences confeſſe they might moſt juſtly be damned, *when the Bookes ſhall be opened.* And ſeeing a *Saviour* hath by his Death purchaſed for them *Repentance*, *Faith*, and *Perſeverance* to the end, (becauſe he would not truſt the perverſe-freedome of their will with the acceptance or refuſall of *Grace*) they ſhall for ever ſing *Hallelujahs* to the praiſe of the undeſerved mercie and goodneſſe of God in their ſalvation.

But ſome will ſay, How ſhall God proceed againſt *Infants* at the *Laſt Day of Judgement*, when *the Bookes ſhall be opened*; namely, *ſuch Infants* of *Chriſtian Parents*, who dye in ſo happie a juncture of Time, as the intervall betwixt their *baptizing*, and before it is poſſible for them to commit *actuall ſinne?* For will ſome ſay, *The Bookes*, when *opened*, are effectually not *opened* in relation to them; all *the Bookes* will be but *Blankes* and *White Paper*, as

containing no *Charge* against them. For first, for *Originall sinne* some hold, that that in *Baptisme* is washed away; and all the world will be their *Compurgators*, that such *Infants* neither have nor can commit *actuall transgression*: and therefore how can God with Justice proceed to the condemnation of such *Innocents*? This Argument hath prevailed so farre with some Learned and *Religious Divines*, as to make them *charitably judgemented* of the finall estate of all such *Infants*.

Give me leave to stand *Neuter* in this Point: onely this I will adde, If God in the *Last Day* should be pleased to condemne some of such *Infants*, he will render such a Reason thereof, *Rom.* 2. 5. *in that Day of the revelation of the just judgement of God*, as shall appeare satisfactorie to *Angels*, *Men*, and *Devils*, to the admiration of the good, and confusion of the bad, who shall be present thereat.

And here give me leave to discover a *dangerous Error*, lurking in the brests of most men. We are generally jealous, that God at the *Last Day* will not come off with that *Credit* which we could wish and desire:

desire: We suspect, that his *Name* will *hærere ad metas*, that his *Justice* will not appeare so cleare as we both desire and expect, if he should *condemne* such and such persons whom we in our narrow apprehensions conceive *uncondemnable*, according to the proportion of Justice, as we doe measure it. But know, that this suspition hath a double mischiefe therein.

First, The owners thereof are *jealous over God with an ungodly jealousie*, fearing where no feare is; and it proceedeth from a Principle of *Atheisme*, seeing it springeth from the same Root, to denie a God, and doubt, that God will appeare just in manifesting his owne Proceedings.

Secondly, This takes off mens thoughts, to take care for themselves, what they shall plead in their owne behalfe, and how they shall manage their owne Defence at the *Last Day*, and maketh them employed where they ought not, troubling themselves about that wherein they are not concerned. If it be a hainous offence, and punishable by the Lawes of man, 1 *Pet.* 4. 15. to be *a busie-body in other mens mat-*

ters, how great is the offence, to be busie in the *Mysteries* of the God of Heaven? Let us leave it to him to act his own part; *Look every man on his owne things*, Phil. 2. 4. God grant, we may but come off so well at the *Barre*, as God doth at the *Bench*, and appeare righteous by God in *Christ*, whilest God will appeare so of himselfe in himselfe.

And here let me advise men to be modest with sobrietie, and not to be over-prying into the *Mysteries* of Gods Proceedings.

The *Chronicler* of the Citie of *London* (*Stow* in his *Survey* of *London*, *pag.* 137.) telleth us a remarkable Storie of one Sir *John Champneyes*, *Alderman* and *Major* of *London*, who built a faire House, with an high Brick Tower, in *Tower-street Ward*, *the first that ever was built in any private mans house, to over-looke his Neighbours in the Citie.* For before his time, there were no *Towers* in that Citie, but such as belonged as *Steeples* to *Churches* & *Covents*, or else pertained to the *Kings Palace.* But his ambition herein, saith our Author, was publiquely punished, falling blinde some yeares

yeares before his death: ſo that he who would ſee more then all, ſaw leſſe then any of his *Neighbours.*

Take heed of *Towring Thoughts* and *Aſpiring Inquiries*, to mount up, if poſſible, into *Gods Minde*, there to *ſeeke* and *ſearch* the Cauſes of his *ſecret Will* and *Pleaſure:* Such *Curioſitie* is commonly ſeverely puniſhed, it being juſt with God to deprive them of that *Light* they have, who affect *Knowledge* above the bounds of *Sobrietie:* Such *profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, often become fooles*, and forfeit the Eyes of their Soules, for their immoderate prying into *forbidden Myſteries.*

Uſe 1.

Are all then to appeare before God, *when the Bookes are opened?* This ſerveth in the firſt place to confute ſuch who conceive God will hold *Malefactors guiltleſſe*, becauſe he doth not preſently inflict his Judgements upon them, *Eccleſiaſtes* 8.11. *Becauſe Sentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the heart of the ſonnes of men is fully ſet in them to doe*

evill. These men proceed upon a dangerous mistake, namely, they conceive the *Bookes* to be *cancelled*, which are onely *concealed:* and because God *forbeares*, they mistake him, to have *forgot* to doe Justice.

There was lately a *Judge* in *England*, whom I need not be ashamed to name, as the honour of his *Robe* and *Profession, viz. Justice Dodderidge*, whom they commonly called the *sleeping Judge*. Indeed, he had an affected drowsie posture on the *Bench*, insomuch, that many persons unacquainted with his Custome therein, having Causes of Concernment to be tryed before him, have even given all for lost, as expecting no Justice from a *Dormant Judge:* when he all the while did onely retire himselfe within himselfe, the more seriously to consult with his owne Soule about the validitie of what was alledged and proved unto him; as appeared afterwards by those *Oracles of Law* which he pronounced.

Wicked men, in like manner, erroneously conceive God to be a *sleeping God*, chiefely on this account, because of the long

long impunitie of *notorious offenders*. *David* himselfe may seeme in some sort guiltie of the same vulgar error, *Psal.* 44. 23. *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.* But God in due time will soundly confute mens mistake herein, and appeare what he is, a slow, but sure *Revenger* of *Malefactors*, in the *Day* when *the Bookes shall be opened.*

Use 2.

Are we all to be tryed in the *Day* when *the Bookes shall be opened?* Let us then labour to get these *Bookes* cleared (so much as relateth to our particular Accompts) and crossed by the *Blood of Jesus Christ*, before that *Day* doth approach; and let us not despise the committing of small sinnes, knowing that many of them quickly swell our Accompts. It is a true Maxime, *Qui negligit minima nunquam ditescet*, He that neglects small things, shall never make a Rich man. Who would thinke, that a Penny a day should within the compasse of a yeare amount to more then thirtie shillings? It is incredible, how

insensibly many small sinnes greaten and inflame our Reckonings, and therefore let us beware thereof.

The *Italians* have a Proverb, *It is good to goe to Bed without supping, and to rise in the Morning without owing.* If *Physicians* will approve the former part for *healthfull, good Husbands* will justifie the latter part for *thriftie.* But especially it is good Divinitie, in relation to our spirituall Accompts; Happie he who this Night, by the effectuall pleading of *Christs Merits*, gaineth of God, before the closing of his eyes, the clearing of his sinnes, that so to Morrow Morning he may arise dis-engaged and un-indebted for his former Offences.

Lastly, let this teach us to be warie what we doe on Earth, as knowing and beleeving, that a Memoriall is kept in Heaven, of whatsoever we act here below.

There is still a *Project* propounded on the *Royall Exchange* in *London*, wherein one offers (if meeting with proportionable encouragement for his paines) so ingenuously to contrive the matter, that every

every Letter written, shall with the same paines of the *Writer* instantly render a double impression, besides the *Originall*; each of which Inscript (for Transcript I cannot properly tearme it) shall be as faire and full, as lively and legible as the *Originall*. Whether this will ever be really effected, or whether it will prove an *Abortive*, as most Designes of this nature, Time will tell. Sure I am, if performed, it will be very beneficiall for *Merchants*, who generally keepe *Duplicates* of their Letters to their *Correspondents*.

What here is propounded, is alreadie performed, in relation to our actions, in Gods presence. Whatsoever we doe, good or bad, at the acting thereof reflects (beside the *Principle*) a double representation of the same.

One, in the *Booke of our Conscience*. The *woman of Samaria* said to her *Fellow-Citizens*, John 4. 29. *Come see the man that told me all things that ever I did*. Herein *Hyperbolicall* was her expression: *Christ* told her not all, but many things, and one thing too much for her, (without our

out her ſerious repentance) namely, her unlawfull converſing with him who was not her Husband.

But this is moſt true of our *Conſcience*; it will really repreſent unto us whatſoever we have done, either accuſing or excuſing us therein. And as *Sores* and *Wounds* doe throb and ake the more in *infirme perſons*, the neerer it draweth to Night; ſo the older men grow, and the neerer they approach unto their Death, the more frequent, conſtant, and acute will be the prickings and the pinchings of their Conſciences.

The ſecond Copie of all our Actions is kept in Heaven, recorded in *Gods Booke*. Let all therefore, but eſpecially men in places of *Legall Proceedings*, (whether *Judiciall* or *Miniſteriall Officers* therein) be minded of integritie in their carriage from my *Text*, and the occaſion thereof, *THE GRAND ASSIZES*. Let *Diligent Attorneyes* ſo faithfully *Solicite*, let *Painefull Solicitours* ſo honeſtly *Agitate*, let *Truſtie Sheriffes* ſo truly *Impannell*, let honeſt

Juris-

Jurie-men ſo conſcionably give their *Verdict*, let faithfull *Witneſſes* ſo ſincerely *Depoſe*, let the *Honourable* and *Learned Judges* ſo unpartially paſſe their *Sentence*, as knowing they muſt give an Account thereof to GOD in the Day when *the Bookes are opened.*

AMEN.

FINIS.

E. 12. 67 2

A Comment ON RUTH:

BY

T. F. B. D.

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

LONDON,
Printed for *G.* and *H. Everſden*,
and are to be ſold at the Sign of the
Greyhound in *Pauls* Church-yard.
1654.

E.12.67.2

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E 15. 67

1300:90

TO

The Right Worſhipfull,
the Lady ANNE ARCHER,
in the Countie of
WARWICK.

THE *Apoſtle to the* Philippians, chap. 4. v. 15. *giveth them this high commendation,* None communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye onely. *Should I apply the ſame in relation of my ſelfe to your Ladyſhip, I ſhould*

ſhould be injurious to the Bountie of many my Worthy Benefactours. *How-ever (not* exclusively *of others, but)* eminently *I muſt acknowledge you a Grand Encourager of my Studies. In publique teſtimonie whereof, I preſent theſe my Endeavours to your Ladiſhips Patronage.*

Indeed they were Preached in an eminent Place, when I firſt entred into the Miniſterie, *above twentie yeares ſince, and therefore you will pardon the many Faults that may be found therein. Nor were they intended for publique view, till underſtanding the Reſolution of ſome of my Auditors to Print them (to their Profit, but my Prejudice) by their imperfect Notes, I adventured on this ſeaſonable prevention.*

The

DEDICATORIE.

The Lord make his Graces flow plentifully from the Head of your Family, your Religious Husband, to the loweſt Skirts thereof, the laſt and leaſt of your Relations,

Your Ladyſhips

in all Chriſtian Offices,

THOMAS FULLER.

A Comment ON Ruth.

CHAP. 1. Verſ. 1.

Now it came to paſſe in the dayes when the Judges Ruled, that there was a Famine in the Land,

BEfore we enter into theſe words, ſomething muſt be premiſed, concerning the Name, Matter, End, Author of this Book. It hath the name from *Ruth*, the moſt remarkable perſon in it, to whom God vouchſafed his Grace, not onely to write her name in the Book of Life in Heaven, but alſo to

prefix her name before a Book of Life in Earth. The Matter may be divided into these two Parts: The first Chapter shewth, *That many are the troubles of the righteous*; and the three last do shew, *That God deliv'reth them out of all.* One of the *Ends* is, to shew the Pedigree of our *Saviour*, otherwise *Genealogers* had been at a loss, for four or five Descents in the deducing thereof: Another *End* is, under the conversion of *Ruth* the *Moabitesse*, to typifie the calling of the *Gentiles*, that as he took of the blood of a *Gentile* into his body, so he should shed the blood out of his body for the *Gentiles*, that there might be one Shepheard, and one Sheepfold. The *Authors* name (probably *Samuel*) is conceal'd, neither is it needfull it should be known: for even as a man that hath a piece of *Gold* that he knows to be weight, and sees it stamped with the *Kings Image*, careth not to know the name of that man who minted or coined it: So we, seeing this Book to have the superscription of *Cæsar*, the stamp of the *Holy Spirit*, need not to be curious to know who was the *Pen-man* thereof. And now to the words

Now it came to passe in the dayes when the Judges Ruled, that there was a Famine in the Land.

Observe in the words; What? a *Famine*: Where? in the *Land*: When? *In the time that the Judges judged*; the time being set down for the better certainty of the *History*.

Quest. Is this the Land whereof it is said, *Gen.* 49. 20. Asher *his bread shall be fat, and afford dainties for a King*; *which is call'd*, Deut. 8. 7. *A good Land of Wheat and Barley, Vineyards and Fig-trees, Oyle, Olive and Hony, which is commended*, Ezek. 20. 6. *to be a Land flowing with Milke and Hony, the glory of all Lands. How commeth it to passe, that thy Rivers of Oyl are now dammed up? thy streams of Wine drained drie? that there is no bread found in* Bethlem, *the house of bread?*

Answ Israel hath sinned, a fruitfull Land maketh he barren, for the sinne of the people that dwell therein. The peoples *hard hearts* were rebellious to *God*, and the *hard earth* proved unprofitable to them: their *flinty* eyes would afford no

tears to bemoan their sins, and the churlish Heavens would afford no moysture to water their earth: Man proved unfaithfull to *God* his *Maker*, the Earth proved unfruitfull to *Man* her *Manurer*.

Obser. Famine is a heavy punishment, wherewith *God* afflicteth his people for their sinnes: that it is an heavie punishment appeareth, because *David*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14. chose the *Pestilence* before it; for even as *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, *Judg.* 8. 21. chose rather to fall by the hand of *Gideon*, then by the hand of *Jether* his Son, because the Childs want of strength would cause their abundance of pain: so better it is to be speedily dispatcht by a violent disease, then to have ones life in a *Famine* prolong'd by a lingring torture. *That it is inflicted for their sinnes*, is shewed, *Lev.* 26. 19. *Deut.* 28. 23. 1 *King.* 8. 37. and these sinnes most especially procure *Famine*. 1. *Idolatry*, 1 *King.* 17. 1. 2 *King.* 4. 36. 2ly. *Abuse of plenty*, the prodigall Child, *Luk.* 15. *from the keeping of Harlots, was brought to the keeping of Hoggs*. It is just with God to make men want that to supply their necessity, which they have mis-

miſpended in their nicetie. 3ly. *Shedding of Innocent bloode*, 2 Sam. 21. 1. 4ly. *Oppreſſion of the poor*, Amos 4. 16. And no wonder if men, to grinde the faces of poor people make mony, to which God gave no naturall fruit, to bring forth a monſtrous increaſe, if God cauſe the earth which naturally ſhould be fruitfull, to become barren and afford no profit.

Vſe 1.

It may ſerve to confute ſuch, that when *God* doth ſcourge them with *Famine*, (as blind *Balaam* fell a beating of his dumb beaſt, when he himſelf was in fault) they vent their ſpite in curſing and railing on the poor Creatures, whereas indeed were the matter wel weighed, they might ſay of all Creatures as *Judah* did of *Thamar* his daughter-in-law, *they are more righteous then we*: for locuſts, mildew, blaſting, immoderate drought, and moyſture, are the means by which mans ſinne is the cauſe, for which *Famine* is inflicted. And yet in proſperity, we are commonly like Hogs feeding on the maſt, not minding his hand that ſhaketh it down; in ad-

verſity, like Doggs biting the ſtone, not marking the hand that threw it.

Vſe. 2.

If any deſire to prevent or remove a *Famine*, let us prevent and remove the cauſes thereof. Firſt let us practiſe that precept, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 21. *Babes keep your ſelves from Idols.* 2ly. Let us be heartily thankfull to God for our plenty, who by the ſeaſonable weeping of the Heavens, hath cauſed the plentifull laughter of the Earth, and hath ſent the former *Raine* to perform the part of a *Midwife*, to Deliver the infant *Corne* out of the *wombe* of the parched *Earth*; and the latter *Raine* to doe the duty of a *Nurſe*, to ſwell and battle the *Grain*. Let us not ſeeth the *Kid* in the Mothers *Milke*: let not our wanton *Pallats* ſpoile wholſome *Meat*, before it commeth to the juſt *Maturity*; neither let us caſt away any good food, but after our *Saviours* example, *Let us cauſe the Fragments to be basketted up that nothing may be loſt.* 3ly. Let us pray with *David*, Pſal. 51. 14. *Deliver us from blood guiltineſſe O Lord:* and let us ſeeke

that

that the hoary hairs may not go down to the Grave in peace of ſuch as have ſhed innocent blood; (leaſt the perſonal offence of a private Man remaining unpuniſhed, become the Nationall ſinne of a Kingdome) but upon the King, and upon his Seed, and upon his Houſe, and upon his Throne ſhall be Peace for ever from the Lord.

Laſtly, Let us be pittifull, and liberall to relieve the diſtreſſes of the poor; for why ſhould our dead Tables groan under the weight of needleſſe feaſt upon them, while the *Gods* living *Temples* groan under the want of neceſſary food within them. The *Athenian* women had a cuſtome to make a Picture of *Famine* every yeare, and to drive it out of their City with theſe words: *Out Famine, in Food: Out Penury, in Plenty*: but let us ſay in word, and ſecond it in deed; *Out Sin, in Sanctity: Out Prophaneſſe, in Piety*: and then we ſhall ſee, that as long as our King Reigneth, there ſhall be no *Famine* in our Land.

But however God ſhall diſpoſe of us for outward bleſſings, I pray God keepe

us from that *Soule Famine*, mentioned *Amos* 8. 12. that we living under the *Northern Heavens* should wander to the *East*, and run to and fro to *seek the word of the Lord, and should not find it*; but may the *light* of the *Gospell* remain with us on Earth, as long as the faithfull witnesse endureth in Heaven.

And a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah *went to sojourne in the Country of* Moab,

THese words containe a Journey or Removall, wherein observe; Who went; *a certain Man*: Whence? from *Bethlehem-Judah*: Whether? *to sojourne in Moab*. We shall have a fitter occasion to speak of the party removing hereafter. I begin with the place from whence he went, *Bethlehem-Judah*.

This

This was the place, nigh to which *Rachel* as she was travelling fell into Travail, and ended her journey to *Heaven*, in the midst of her journey on *Earth*: there was another of the same name in *Zabulon*, *Josh.* 19. 15. and therefore *Judah* is added for difference and distinction.

Observ.

The *Holy Spirit* descends to our capacity, and in Scripture doth multiply words to make the matter the plainer: let this teach the Sons of *Levi*, when they deliver one doubtfull and ambiguous Doctrine, which may admit of severall constructions, so that there is danger least that people may mistake their meaning, to demur a while on such a point, and not to be niggardly of their words, till they have blotted all doubt and difficulty out of it. Herein they shall follow God for their pattern, who least *Bethlehem* in my Text, should be confounded with *Bethlehem* in *Zabulon*, addeth for distinction *Bethlehem-Judah*.

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15. *How many hired servants of my Father have bread enough, and I die for hunger:* So here we see that the uncircumcised *Moabites*, Gods slaves and vassalls, had store of plenty, whilest *Israel*, Gods Children (but his *prodigal Children*, which by their sinnes had displeased their heavenly Father) were pinched with penurie.

Observ.

Hence we gather, God oftentimes denyes outward blessings to his Children, when as he vouchsafeth them to the wicked: the wicked mans eyes start out with fatnesse; *Davids* bones scarce cleave to his flesh: *Ahab* hath an Ivory House, the Godly wander in *Dens* and *Caves* of the Earth; the *Rich Gluiton* fareth deliciously every day, whilest the Godly, *Psal.* 107. *were hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them: He was clothed in purple and fine linnen, whilest the Godly wander up and down in sheep skins*; and well may they wear their skins without them, that carry their innocency within them; and the reason thereof is, *Because judgement begins at the house of the Lord, whilst the wicked have their portion in this world.* *Use.*

Vſe.

Let us not judge according to outward appearance, *but judge righteous judgement*, leaſt otherwiſe we condemn the Generation of Gods Children, if we account outward bleſſings the ſigns of Gods favour, or calamities, the arguments of his diſpleaſure: neither let the afflicted Chriſtian faint under Gods heavy hand, but let him know to his comfort, God therefore is angry in this world, that he may not be angry in the world to come, and mercifully inflicteth temporall puniſhment, that he may not juſtly confound with eternall torment.

But here ariſeth a queſtion, Whether *Elimelech did well to go from* Bethlehem-Judah, *into the Land of* Moab? for the better ſatisfaction whereof, we will ſuppoſe a plain and honeſt Neighbour thus diſſwading him from his departure.

Diſſwaſion.

Give me leave Neighbour *Elimelech* to ſay unto thee, as the Angel did to *Hagar*, whence commeſt thou? and whether goeſt

eſt thou? wilt thou leave that place where Gods worſhip is truly profeſſed, and goe into an Idolatrous Country? *Woe is thee that muſt dwell in* Moab, *and be an inhabitant amongſt the worſhippers of* Melchom: Indeed our Father *Abraham* came out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, an idolatrous Country, to come into the Land of *Canaan*; but why ſhouldſt thou go out of the Land of *Canaan* into an idolatrous Country, where thou ſhalt have neither *Prieſt* nor *Prophet*, nor *Paſſeover*. Yea, what moſt is to be feared, your frequent converſing with the *People* of the *Country*, will at length bring you into a *love* and *liking* of their *Superſtitions*, and ſo draw Gods anger againſt you; wherefore reverſe your intent of removing, leaſt while thou ſeek'ſt to ſtore thy *Body*, thou ſtarveſt thy *Soul*; rather venter the breaking of the Caſket, then the looſing of the *Jewel*, and go not from *Bethlehem-Judah*, unto the Land of *Moab*.

Anſwer.

To this *Elimelech* might anſwer; your diſſwaſion doth ſomewhat move me, but not remove my reſolution; I do not forſake

ſake my Country, but am forced from it; God hath with-holden the *Wine* and the *Winepreſſe*, and if I ſtay, I am likely to ſtarve; I conceive it therefore to be my bounden duty to provide the beſt means for my *Family*, and following the examples of *Iſaac's* going into *Gerah*, and *Jacobs* going down into *Egypt* in the time of *Famine*; I intend to remove to *Moab*. And though I ſhall be divided from the viſible Congregation of *Iſrael*, yet ſhall I with my *Family* ſtill remain the lively Members of Gods true Church. For firſt I intend to carry with me the five books of *Moſes* (they will be no great burthen, being compriſed in ſo ſmall a Volum) and according to my poor ability, out of them will I inſtruct my *Family*, whilſt my deare wife *Naomi*, and dutifull children, *Maelon* and *Chilion*, will be diligent to heare and practiſe what I propound unto them: I confeſſe we ſhall have no outward ſacrifices, (becauſe I am not of the Tribe of *Levi*) yet may we offer unto God prayers and praiſes, which God no doubt will as graciouſly accept, as of a *Bullock* that hath Hornes and Hooſes: thus hope I to have

have a little Church in mine own Houſe; and I know, *where two or three are met together in the name of God, there he will be in the midſt of them.* Whereas you object, I ſhould be in danger of being defiled with their *Idolatry*, I will be by Gods grace ſo much the more warie, watchfull and vigilant over my wayes; we ſee the fleſh of fiſhes remaineth freſh, though they alwaies ſwim in the brackiſh waters, and I hope that the ſame God who preſerved righteous *Lot* in the wicked City of *Sodome*, who protected faithfull *Joſeph* in the vicious Court of *Pharaoh*, will alſo keep me unſpotted in the midſt of *Moab*, whether I intend ſpeedily to go, not to *live*, but to *lodge*; not to *dwell*, but to *ſojourne*; not to make it *my habitation for ever*, but *my harbour for a ſeaſon*, till God ſhall viſit his people with plenty, when I purpoſe to return with the ſpeedieſt conveniency.

Thus we ſee *Elimelech* putting the dangers of his removall in one ſcale, the benefits thereof in another; the beam of his judgement is juſtly weighed down to go from *Bethlehem-Iudah*, into the Land of *Moab*. *Obſer.*

Obſerv.

It is lawfull for Men to leave their *Native Soyle*, and to travell into a forraign Country, as for *Merchants*, provided alwaies, that while they ſeek to make gainfull Adventures for their Eſtates, they make not *ſheepwrack of a good Conſcience.*

2ly. For *Embaſſadors*, that are ſent to ſee the Practiſes and Negociations in forraigne Courts.

3ly. For *private perſons*, that travell with an intent to accompliſh themſelves with a better ſufficiency to ſerve their King and Country; but unlawfull it is for ſuch to travell, which *Dinah* like, go only to ſee the Cuſtomes of ſeverall Countries, and make themſelves the Lackies to their own humorous curioſity: hence commeth it to paſſe, when they returne, it is juſtly queſtionable, whether their Clothes be diſguiſed with more fooliſh faſhions, or bodies diſabled with more loathſome Diſeaſes, or ſouls defiled with more notorious vices; having learned Jealouſie from the *Italian*, Pride from the *Spaniard*, Laſciviouſneſſe from the *French*,

French, Drunkenneſſe from the *Dutch*; and yet what need they go ſo farre to learn ſo bad a leſſon, when (God knows) we have too many Schooles, where it is taught here at home.

Now if any do demand of me my opinion concerning our Brethren, which of late left this Kingdome to advance a Plantation in *New England*; ſurely I think, as St. *Paul* ſaid concerning *Virgins*, *He had received no commandment from the Lord*: ſo I cannot find any juſt warrant to incourage men to undertake this removall; but think rather the counſel beſt that King *Ioaſh* preſcribed to *Amaziah*, *tarry at home*: yet as for thoſe that are already gone, farre be it from us to conceive them to be ſuch, to whom we may not ſay, *God ſpeed*, as it is in 2 *Joh. verſ.* 10. but let us pitty them, and pray for them, for ſure they have no need of our mocks, which I am affraid have too much of their own miſeries: I conclude therefore of the two *Englands*, what our Saviour ſaith of the two wines, *Luk.* 5. 39. *No man having taſted of the old, preſently deſireth the new; for he ſaith the old is better.*

He,

He, and his wife, and his two ſons.

Verſ. 2.

And the name of the man was Elimelech, *and the name of his wife,* Naomi, *and the name of his two ſons,* Mahlon *and* Chilion, *Ephrathites of* Bethlehem-Judah, *and they came into the Country of* Moab, *and continued there.*

THeſe words contain 3 firſt, The principall party that undertook the *journey.* 2ly. His company, deſcribed by their relations 3 *his Wife, and Children,* and by their names, *Naomi, Mahlon,* and *Chilion.* 3ly. The ſucceſſe of his *journey* 3 *When he came into the Land of* Moab, *he continued there.*

Now whereas *Elimelech* took his Wife and Children along with him: from his practiſe we gather this Obſervation.

Obſerv.

It is the part of a kind Husband, and of

a carefull Father, not onely to provide for himselfe, but also for his whole *Family*. *Gen.* 2. 24. *A man shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh*, Ephe. 5. 25. *Husbands love your wives*--- for no man as yet hated his own flesh, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. *If any one provideth not for his own Family, he denyeth the faith, and is worse than an Insidell:* this made *Abraham* to take with him at his removal, his meek *Sarah*; *Isaac*, his wise *Rebecca*; *Jacob*, his fair *Rachel*, and fruitfull *Leah*; and *Joseph*, Mat. 2. took with him *Mary*, his espoused wife, and our *Saviour*, his supposed Sonne. And when *Pharoah*, Exod. 10. 9. offered *Moses* with all the men of *Israel* to go out of *Egypt*, but on condition, they should leave their Wives and Children behind them; *Moses* refused the proffer: he would either have them all go out, or else he would not go out at all.

Use.

It confuteth such cruell Husbands and careless parents, who if so be with *Iobs* Messengers, they onely can escape alone, they care not though they leave their wives & children to shift for themselves;

like

like the *Oſtridge*, Job. 39. 14. *who leaveth her Eggs in the ſand, and ſo forſakes them.* Surely the two *Kine* which drew the *Arke of God out of the Land of the* Philiſtines *to* Bethſhemeſh, 1 *Sam.* 6. 12. ſhall riſe up at the day of *Judement* and condemn ſuch cruell Parents: for it is ſaid of them, *That as they went along the high way, they did pittifully low by that querulous ditty, as nature afforded them utterance, with witneſſing and expreſſing their affection to their Calves ſhut up at home:* O that there ſhould be ſuch humanity (as I may terme it) in Beaſts, and ſuch beaſtlineſſe in many men. Remember this you that ſit drinking and bezzling wine abroad, whilſt your Family are glad of water at home, and think thus with your ſelves, *To what end is this needleſſe waſt, might it not have been ſold for many a penny, and have been beſtowed on my poor Wife and Children.*

Obſerv.

Secondly, Whereas we find *Naomi* and her Sons going with *Elimelech*, we gather; It is the duty of a dear Wife, and of dutiſull Children, to go along with

their Husband and Parents, when on juſt cauſe they remove into a forraign Country. It was an unmanly and cowardly ſpeech of *Barak* to *Deborah*, Judg. 4. 8. *If thou wilt go with me, then will I go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then will I not go:* but it would be a gracious reſolution of a grave Matron and her Children; *Husband, if you be pleaſed to depart, I will be ready to accompany you; Father, if you be minded to remove, I will attend upon you: but if you be diſpoſed to ſtay, I will not ſtir from the place where you abide:* otherwiſe if the wife refuſeth to go along with her Husband, what *Abraham Gen.* 24. 8. ſaid to the *Servant* in another caſe, is true in this reſpect; but if the Woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou ſhalt be clear from thine Oath; if the wife be ſo peeviſh and perverſe, that ſhe will not go along with her Husband, who propoundeth lawfull means unto her to relieve her wants; then is he acquitted from the Oath he made her in Marriage, when he plighted his troth unto her, in ſickneſſe and in health, to maintain her.

Queſtion.

But methinks I hear the Widows and Orphants crying unto me, as the Souldiers to *John Baptiſt*, *But what ſhall we do?* *Luk.* 3. It is true, ſaith the *Widow*, that kind Husbands are to provide for their Wives, but alas we have no *Elimelech's* to carry us into a forraign Country in the time of *Famine*; indeed ſaith the *Orphant*, it is the Fathers duty to provide for his Children; but my Parents are dead long ago, I have not as *Samuel* had, a Mother *Hannah* every year to bring me a *new Coate*; what ſhall we do in this our diſtreſſe.

Anſwer.

Anſwer, Uſe the beſt means you can, and for the reſt, relie on Gods providence, who is ſaid, *Pſal.* 10.20. *To help the fatherleſſe and poor to their Right*, Pſal. 68. 5. *To be a father to the fatherleſſe, and to defend the cauſe of the Widow, even God in his holy habitation:* who will deale with thee as he did with *David*, *When my Mother and Father forſooke me, the Lord cared for me.*

So much for *Elimelech's* company deſcribed

ſcribed by their relations: we ſhould come now to ſpeak of their names, where we might take occaſion to ſpeak of the Antiquity, and uſe of Names, but that hereafter we ſhall have better conveniency to treat thereof, in thoſe words, *Call me not* Naomi, *but call me* Marah: We come therefore to the ſucceſſe of *Elimelech's* journey;

And they came into the Country of Moab, *and they continued there.*

The meaning is, That the *Moabites* afforded them harbour without any moleſtation.

Obſerv.

From whence the Obſervation is this; *We ought to be Hoſpitall and courteous to receive ſtrangers.* Firſt, Becauſe God in ſeverall places of Scripture enjoyneth it, *Exod.* 23. 9. *Levit.* 19. 33. 2ly. Becauſe God apprehendeth all courteſie done to a ſtranger as beſtowed on himſelfe; *He that receiveth you, receiveth me, &c. I was a ſtranger and ye harboured me,* Mat. 25. And then if we entertain ſtrangers, it may be ſaid of us not onely as it is of *Lot* and *Abraham*, Heb. 13. 2. *That we entertained*

An-

Angels, bnt that we entertained God himſelfe unawares. 3ly. Becauſe it ſpiritually conſidered, we our ſelves are ſtrangers with the *Patriarks*, Heb. 11. *We have here no abiding City, but ſeeke one from above, whoſe builder and maker is God. I beſeech you as Strangers and Pilgrims*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. Laſtly, Becauſe of the uncertainty of our own eſtates, for thou knoweſt not what evill ſhall be upon the earth, it may be we that now relieve ſtrangers, hereafter our ſelves being ſtrangers may be relieved by others.

Uſe.

Let us not therefore abuſe ſtrangers and make a prey of them, making an advantage of their unskilfulneſſe in the language, and being unacquainted with the faſhions of the Land; like *Laban* that deceived his Nephew *Iacob* in placing *Leah* for *Rachel*, and to cloak his cheating, pleaded it was the cuſtome of the Country: wherefore rather let us be courteous unto them, leaſt the Barbarians condemne us, who ſo courteouſly intreated S. *Paul*, with his ſhipwrackt companions, and the *Mo-*

abites in my Text, who ſuffered *Elimelech* when he came into the Land, to continue there.

Verſ. 3. 4. 5.

And Elimelech Naomies *Husband dyed, and ſhe was left, and her two Sonnes, &c.*

IN theſe words we have two Marriages uſhered, and followed by Funeralls: I will begin there, where one day all muſt make an end, *at Death*;

And Elimelech Naomies *Husband dyed.*

I have ſeldom ſeen a Tree thrive that hath been tranſplanted when it was old, the ſame may be ſeen in *Elimelech*, his aged body brooks not the forraign Aire; though he could avoid the Arrows of Famine in *Iſrael*, yet he could not ſhun the Darts of *Death* in *Moab*: he that lived in a place of *Penury*, muſt die in a Land of *Plenty*: Let none condemne *Elimelech's* removal as unlawful, becauſe of his ſuddain dearth, for theſe actions are not ungodly which

which are unſucceſsfull, nor thoſe pious which are proſperous, ſeeing the lawfulneſſe of an action is not to be gathered from the joyfulneſſe of the event, but from the juſtneſſe of the cauſe, for which it is undertaken.

Obſerv. 1.

Hence we obſerve, that God can eaſily fruſtrate our faireſt hopes, and defeat our moſt probable projects, in making thoſe places moſt dangerous, which we account moſt ſafe and ſecure, cauſing death to meet us there, where we think furtheſt to flie from it.

Obſerv. 2.

2. We ſee that no outward plenty can priviledge us from death; the ſand of our life runneth as faſt, though the Hour-glaſs be ſet in the ſunſhine of proſperity, as in the gloomy ſhade of affliction.

And ſhe was left and her two Sons.

Here we ſee how mercifully God dealt with *Naomi*, in that he quenched not all the ſparks of her comfort at once; but though he took away the ſtock, he left her the ſtems; though he deprived her as

it

it were of the uſe of her own leggs, by taking away her *Husband*, yet he left her a ſtaffe in each of her hands, her two Sons to ſupport her. Indeed afterwards he took them away, but firſt he provided her a gracious Daughter-in-law: whence we learn, God powreth not all his afflictions at once, but ever leaveth a little comfort, otherwiſe we ſhould not onely be preſſed down, but cruſh't to powder under the weight of his heavy hand.

And they tooke them wives of the women of Moab, *&c.*

Here we ſee the faſhion of the world, mankind had long ago decaied, if thoſe breaches which are daily made by Death, were not daily made up by Marriage. But here ariſeth a queſtion, Whether theſe matches were lawfull? for anſwer whereof, we will ſuppoſe *Naomi* diſſwading her Sonnes on this manner.

Diſſwaſion.

What, my Sonnes? and what, perſons of my wombe? and what, the Sonnes of my deſire? give not your ſtrength to

ſtrange

ſtrange women, and your wayes to that that deſtroyed men. It is not for you O *Mahlon* and *Chilion*, it is not for you to marry *Moabites*; nor for the Sonnes of an *Iſraelite* to marry the Daughters of the uncircumciſed. Remember my Sonnes what God ſaith by the mouth of *Moſes*, *Deut.* 7. 3. *Thou ſhalt not make Marriages with them, thy Daughter ſhalt thou not give to his Sonne, nor take his daughter to thy Sonne, for they will turn away thy Son from following me, to ſerve ſtrange Gods, ſo will the anger of the Lord be kindled againſt thee to deſtroy thee ſuddenly.* Take heed therefore leaſt long looking on theſe women, you at length be made blind, leaſt they ſuck out your ſouls with kiſſes, and Snake-like, ſting you with embraces: curb your affections untill you come into *Canaan* where you ſhall find varietie of wives, who as they come not ſhort of theſe for the beauties of their bodies, ſo they farre go beyond them for the ſanctitie of their ſouls.

Anſwer.

To this diſſwaſion, thus might her Childeren anſwer: We thank you deare Mo-

Mother for your carefulneſſe over our good; but we muſt intreat you not to interpret it undutifulneſſe, if upon good reaſon we diſſent from your judgement herein. In the place by you cited, *Marriages* are forbidden with ſuch ſtrange women as are of a ſtubborn obſtinate and refractory nature, ſuch as are likely to ſeduce their Husbands; whereas you ſee the mild, towardly, and tractable diſpoſition of theſe women we meane to make our wives; we hope to plant theſe wild branches in Gods Vineyard, to bring theſe ſtraggling ſheep to his fold, to make them Proſelytes to our Religion: Beſides, this Marriage will be advantagious for us, thereby we ſhall endeare our ſelves into the *Moabites* affections, they will uſe us the more courteouſly, when we have married one of their own kindred.

But methinks my tongue refuſeth to be any longer the advocate of an unlawfull deed, and my mouth denyeth to be the Orator of an unjuſt action: when I have ſaid what I can for the defence of their Marriage, I ſhall but make a plaſter too narrow for the ſore, the breach is ſo broad

I cannot ſtop it, though I may dam it up with untempered morter. Nothing can be brought for the defence of theſe matches, ſomething may be ſaid for the excuſe of them, but that fetcht not from pietie, but from poliey; not certain, but conjecturall; yet here may we ſee the power and providence of God, who made ſo good uſe of theſe Mens defaults, as hereby to bring *Ruth*, firſt to be a retainer to the family of *Faith*, and afterwards a joyfull Mother in *Iſrael*. This is that good *Chymick* that can diſtill good out of evill, light out of darkneſſe, order out of confuſion, and make the crooked actions of men tend to his own glory in a ſtraight line, and his Childrens good.

I ſpeak not this to defend any mans folly in doing of evill, but to admire Gods wiſdome, who can bring good out of evil: and ſurely he that will turn evill to good, will turn good to the beſt.

And they dwelled there about ten years.

Here we have the term of *Naomi's* living in *Moab*, and the Families laſting in *Iſrael*, *ten years*: we read of a Famine for three years,

years, 2 *Sam.* 21. of three years and a half, 1 *King.* 17. of seven years, *Gen.* 42. also 2 *King.* 8. but this *ten years Famine* longer then any; seven yeares which *Jacob* served for *Rachel*, seemed to him but a short time; but surely those ten yeares seemed to the afflicted *Israelites*, and to the banished *Naomi*, as so many millions of years.

Observ.

God doth not presently remove his rod from the back of his Children, but sometimes scourgeth them with long-lasting afflictions: the reason is, because we go on and persist so long in our sinnes; and yet herein even mercy exalteth her selfe against judgement: for if God should suffer the fire of his fury to burn, so long as the fuell of our sinnes do last, *Lord, who were able to abide?* were the dayes of our suffering, apportioned to the dayes of our living, no flesh would be saved, but for the *Elect sake*, those dayes are shortned.

Use.

Beare with patience light afflictions; when God afflicteth his Children with long-

long lasting punishments; mutter not for a burning Feaver of a fortnight, what is this to the woman that had a running Issue for twelve years; murmur not for a twelve moneths quartain Ague, 'tis nothing to the woman that was bowed for eighteen years; nor seven years Consumption, to the man that lay thirty eight years lame at the Pool of *Bethezda*.

And Mahlon *and* Chilion *died also both of them.*

It was but even now that old *Elimelech* was gone to bed; see, his Sonnes would not sit long up after the Father; onely here is the difference, *He* like ripe fruit fell down of his own accord; they like green Apples, were cudgel'd off the Tree.

Observ.

Even young men in the prime of their age, are subject to death; the Sons of *Iacob* when they came to the Table of *Ioseph* sat down, the eldest according to his age, and the youngest according to his youth; but Death observes not this method, she takes not Men in seniority, but sometimes

times ſends them firſt to the buriall that came laſt from the birth, and thoſe that came laſt from the wombe, firſt to their winding ſheet. There were as many Lambs and Kids ſacrificed in the old Teſtament, as Goats and old Sheep; but ſurely more there be that die in infancy and in youth, then of thoſe that attain to old age.

Uſe.

Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth: you whoſe joynts are knit with ſturdy ſinews, whoſe veines are full of blood, whoſe arteries are fluſh't with ſpirits, whoſe bones are fraught with Marrow; *Obediah*-like, *ſerve God from your youth*; put not the day of death far from you; think not your ſtrength to be armour of proof againſt the darts of Death, when you ſee the Corſlet of *Mahlon* and *Chilion* ſhot through in the left; ſo *Mahlon* and *Chilion* died both of them.

And the woman was left of her two Sons and of her Husband.

Before we had the particular loſſes of *Naomi*, now we have them all reckoned up

up in the totall ſum; a Threefold Cable, ſaith *Solomon*, is not eaſily broken, and yet we ſee in *Naomies* threefold cable of comfort twiſted of her husband and her two ſonnes, broken by Death: of the two Sex, the woman is the weaker; of women, old women are moſt feeble; of old women, widows moſt wofull; of widowes, thoſe that are poor, their plight moſt pittifull; of poor widows, thoſe that want Children, their caſe moſt dolefull; of widows that want Children, thoſe that once had them and after loſt them, their eſtate moſt deſolate; of widows that have had Children, thoſe that are ſtrangers in a forraign Country, their condition moſt comfortleſſe: yet all theſe met together in *Naomi* as in the center of ſorrow, to make the meaſure of her miſery preſſed down ſhaken together, running over. I conclude therefore, many Men have had affliction, none like *Job*; many women have had tribulation, none like *Naomi*.

Verſ. 6.

Then ſhe aroſe with her Daughters in law, that ſhe might returne from the Country of Moab: *for ſhe had heard in the Country of* Moab, *how that the Lord had viſited his people, in giving them bread.*

THeſe words contain two general parts.

1. Gods viſiting his people with Plenty.

2. *Naomies* viſiting of her people with her perſon.

I begin with the firſt in the Order of the words,

Then ſhe aroſe with her Daughters in law, &c.

Obſerv.

We muſt tarry no longer in an Idolatrous Land, when God offereth us an occaſion to returne into our own Country: for ſo long as we tarry in an Idolatrous Land on a juſt cauſe, ſo long we are in our vocation & in Gods protection: but when God

God openeth us a Gap to returne, and we will not through it, we are neither in our calling, nor Gods keeping, but muſt ſtand on our own adventures; and who knows not how ſlenderly we ſhall be kept, when we are left to our own cuſtody: let not therefore *Ioſeph* with his Wife and Son, tarry any longer in the Land of *Egypt*, when he is dead that ſought the life of the Child.

Examples we have of thoſe, which in the dayes of Queen *Mary*, fled beyond the Seas; though they were not in a Paganiſh, onely in a forraign Country, Mr. *Scorey*, *Cocks*, *Whitehead*, *Grindall*, *Horne*, *Sandys*, *Elmore*, *Geſt*, *Jewel*; if fear lent them feet to run when they went away, joy gave them wings to fly when they came home againe: let none therefore pretend in needleſſe excuſes to linger in the Land of *Egypt*, when they may return into the hony-flowing Land of *Canaan*.

For ſhe had heard in the Country of Moab.

I ſuppoſe when any Meſſenger arrived in *Moab*, out of the Land of *Canaan*, *Nao-*

mie did preſently repaire unto him, and load him with queſtions concerning the eſtate of her Country: How do the *Iews* my Country-men? How faireth it with the *Bethlehemites* my Neighbours? with *Boaz* my Kinſman? What is the rate of Corne? What the price of Oyle? What the value of Wine? if there be no performance for the preſent, what promiſe is there for the future? though things be bad now, what hope is there, but they will be better hereafter: Alas he anſwers little; and from his ſilence and ſorrowfull looks, *Naomi* gathers a denial; but as *Elijah* ſending his ſervant towards the Sea, to ſee what ſigns there were of Raine, for ſix ſeverall times together he returned this anſwer, *There is nothing*: but at the ſeventh time, he brought him the tydings of a Cloud riſing out of the Sea; ſo though for nine years *Naomi* had no news but of want and ſcarcity; yet the tenth yeare there came a man (probably he was a good man that brought theſe good tydings) who brought her word that the valleys began to laugh and ſing with plentie;

1 *King.* 18. 43.

tie; and ſo though the hope that was deferred was the fainting of the heart, yet when it came, it was the *Tree of life*. Perchance becauſe the covetous Jews had made nine parts great for their own profit, and the tenth ſmall to cozen God of his portion: God quite contrary, gave them nine years of ſcarcity and want, and at length made the tenth of ſtore and plenty.

Obſerv.

The fame of remarkable Accidents will fly into forraign Countries; for if it be bad news, the wicked will be ſure to tell it in the Gates of *Gath*, and publiſh it in the ſtreets of *Askelon*: if it be good, the godly will proclaim it in the Courts of *Zion*, and diſperſe it within the walls of *Jeruſalem*; whether good or bad (if it be of moment and importance) it will not be covered nor concealed.

Queſtion, *Is it lawfull for us to liſſen, hearken, and enquire after matters of forraigne Countries?*

Anſwer, Though I would not have men to be like the *Athenians*, to hear or tell ſome new thing; yet it is both lawful

and laudable for them to enquire after forraigne affairs, whereby they expreſſe the deſire that they have of the welfare of their diſtant Brethren, the Members of the ſame myſticall body: Example, *Nehe.* 1. 2. And yet would I have men (though they lend their ears) not to beſtow their beliefe on every groundleſſe report which is blazed abroad.

1. Becauſe Fame is often untrue, relating 2 *Sam.* 13. *That all the Kings Sonnes are kil'd, when onely* Amnon *is ſlain,*

2. Becauſe many there be which with the Souldiers, *Mat.* 28. do nothing but invent and diſperſe lyes to gull over-credulous people: And as many a benighted Traveller hath wandred out of his way, whilſt he followed for his lanthorn the Meteor of fooliſh fire; ſo many a man hath been deceived by embracing of lying relations, inſtead of true news. Yet in caſe that *Cuſhai* and *Ahimaaz* confirm the ſame thing, that variety of Meſſengers from divers places of ſundry ſides and ſeverall factions, all agree in materiall and ſubſtantiall points; we ought not to be like unbelieving *Thomas*, to truſt no

more

more then our eyes have ſeen, but may rely on the truth of ſuch relations, and ought accordingly to be affected with ſorrow if the news be bad, or joy, if the tydings tend to the Churches good and Gods glory.

That God had viſited his People.

This was the priviledge of the people of the Jews, that they were ſtyled Gods people, but now *Ammi* is made *Lo-Ammi*, and *Ruchama*, *Lo-ruchama*; and we the Gentiles are placed in their roome, let us therefore remember the words of St. *Paul*, Rom. 11.21. *Be not high minded, but fear, for if God ſpared not the naturall branches of the Olive, fear that he will not ſpare thee alſo.*

O that he would be pleaſed to caſt his eye of pitty upon the poor Jews, which for 1500. yeares and upwards have wandred without Law, without Lord, without Land, and as once they were, ſo once againe to make them his people.

In giving them bread.

By *Bread*, is meant all ſuſtenance neceſſary for the maintaining of our lives,

whereof bread is the chiefeſt. As the Temple of *Dagon* principally leaned on two Pillars, and fell to the ground when *Sampſon* took them away, ſo the buildings of our bodies chiefly relyes on bread and water for outward ſuſtenance, which being taken away, cannot but preſently decay: let others therefore wiſh thoſe diſhes which curioſity hath invented, rather to encreaſe then ſatisfie hunger, which are more delightſome to the eye, then pleaſing to the pallat; yet more pleaſing to the pallat, then wholſome to the ſtomack; let us pray, *Give us this day our daily bread.*

Bread is a diſh in every Courſe, without this can be no Feaſt, with this can be no Famine.

Obſerv.

Gods puniſhments though they laſt ſometimes long, yet alwayes they end at laſt: and yet ſometimes for the manifeſtation of his power, and tryall of his Childrens patience, he ſuffers them to be brought into great extremities: *Abrahams* hand ſhall be heaved up to ſlay *Iſaac*, before the Angell ſhall catch hold of it: *Lazarus* ſhall be three dayes dead before Chriſt

Christ will rayse him; the Ship readie to sinke, before our Saviour will awake; *Peter* must be drencht in the water, before our Saviour will keepe him from drowning; S. *Paul* must be in the Lyons mouth, before he shall be delivered out of it; the Famine must last ten yeare, before God will give them Bread.

An example hereof, wee have in our Neighbouring Churches of *Germanie*, which long have beene afflicted under the Tyrannie of their Oppressors; and now at length, a Sunne is risen out of the North; and after a long Night, the Morning beginneth the Day: And thou *Swethland* shalt not be counted the meanest amongst the Kingdomes of *Europe*; for out of thee did a Prince arise, who hath delivered the distressed Protestants; who at his first Landing, seemed to his Enemies an Obect fitter of their scorne then opposition; They thought our youthfull *David* too unequall a Match to coape with their Generall, who had bean a Man of Warre from his Youth. But as Veritie consisteth not in the pluralitie of Voyces, so Victorie standeth not in the multitude of Souldi-

ers;

ers; but God ſo ordered it, that he that had the beſt Cauſe, had the beſt ſucceſſe. I dare boldly ſay, that all the Proteſtant Princes and States of *Germanie* will be readie truly to ſay of him what *Tertullus* ſpake flatteringly of *Felix*, *Act.* 24. 2. *Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietneſſe, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this Nation by thy providence, we alwayes accept it, and in all places, moſt noble Prince, with all thankefulneſſe.* But let us turne our prayſes of him into prayers for him, That he who hath conquered his Foes, may ſubdue himſelfe, not to be puffed up with his good ſucceſſe. So let all thine enemies periſh, O Lord; but let all them that love thee, be as the Sunne when he goeth forth in his might: And as ever I have earneſtly deſired, ſo now doe I ſtedfaſtly hope to ſee the Day, when our *Naomi* (our worthy *Naomi*, more fruitfull in Miſeries then in Children, and in Vertues then in both) ſhall ariſe, to returne out of the Land of *Holland*, with her Prince and Progenie, when ſhe ſhall heare, that in the Land of *Holland* God hath viſited the *Palatinate*, and given them reſt.

Verſ.

Verſ. 7,8.

And ſhe went out of the place where ſhe was, and her two daughters in law with her, and they went on the way, to returne into the Land of Judah.

And Naomi *ſaid to her daughters in law, Goe, returne each of you to her mother.*

THeſe words containe the continuation of *Naomies* returne; wherein we may obſerve,

Firſt, the companie that went with her, *her two daughters in law.*

Secondly, the diſcourſe ſhe had with this companie, conſiſting of a Precept in the Text, *Goe, returne each of you to her mother:* and of a prayer, in the words following.

Now, whereas her daughters in law did not take their farewell of *Naomi* at the threſhold of their houſe, but went part of the way with her, we gather,

Ob-

Obſervation.

That all offices of kindneſſes and courteſies ought to be betwixt the mother in law and the daughter in law, I meane her ſonnes Wife. And yet looke into the world, and ye ſhall commonly finde enmitie betwixt them, as ſaith *Terence in Heſſera*; *Neque declinatam mulierem reperias ab aliarum ingenio; ità adeò uno omnes animo ſocrus oderunt nurus:* And their fallings out chiefely proceed from theſe two cauſes:

Firſt, they contend which ſhould have the greateſt right & intereſt in the Man, who is Sonne to the one, Husband to the other. *Judah* and *Iſrael* conteſted (2 *Sam.* 19. 43.) which ſhould have moſt part in King *David*; the former claiming it, becauſe he was bone of their bone; the latter pleaded they had eleven parts in him, to *Judahs* ſingle ſhare. Thus mother in lawes and daughter in lawes uſe to fall out; the mother, becauſe her ſonne is fleſh of her fleſh, and bone of her bone, pleades it is right, that he ſhould ſide and ſecond with her; the daughter in law, becauſe he is her Husband, and therefore one fleſh chal-

challengeth that he ſhould rather take her part: ſo betwixt them they fill the Family with all diſcord.

Secondly, they fall out about the managing of the matters in the Houſehold, after whoſe mind they ſhould be ordered: but as S. *James* ſaid in another caſe, *Beloved, theſe things ought not to be ſo*; both theſe brawles may be eaſily ended. The firſt may be taken up by the wiſdome and diſcretion of the ſonne in law, who ought ſo indifferently to poyſe his affections betwixt them both, with ſuch dutifulneſſe and reſpect to the one, ſuch love and kindneſſe to the other, that neither may have juſt cauſe to complaine. And the ſecond controverſie may thus be decided: If the mother hath the ſtate ſtill in her hands, good reaſon it is ſhe ſhould rule the Affaires, and that the daughter in law ſhould wait till her mother in lawes naturall death hath paved the ſucceſſion to the governing of the Family: but if the old woman hath reſigned her eſtate, and confined her ſelfe to an yearely penſion, then ought ſhe not to intermeddle with thoſe matters, from which ſhe had willingly ſequeſtred

queſtred her ſelfe. Were this obſerved, there would not ſo many daughters in law rejoyce, when the day of mourning for their mother in law is come; ſome whereof ſay as the wicked ſaid of *David*, *O, when will ſhe die, and her name periſh?*

Now to come to the diſcourſe ſhe had with them:

Goe, returne &c.

Where ariſeth a queſtion, Whether *Naomi* did well, in perſwadiug her daughters te goe back unto *Moab?* For the ſatisfaction whereof, I will ſet downe, firſt, what may be ſaid againſt; ſecondly, what may be brought for her defence.

Accuſation.

Why *Naomi*, Why didſt thou quench the zeale of thy daughters, which proffered themſelves ſo willingly to goe with thee? Oh, rayne them not backward with diſſwaſions, but rather ſpurre them forward with exhortations; and ſtrive to bring them out of an Idolatrous Land, to a place where Gods Worſhip is purely profeſt: Say unto them, Hearken O daughters

daughters, and conſider, encline your ears, forget alſo your Country, and your own Mothers houſe; ſo ſhall the Lord your God have pleaſure in you: true it is, ye have a Mother in *Moab*, but what of that; care not for your Mother, but care for your Maker: care not for her that Conceived you, but care for him that Created you: tarry not with them, no not ſo much as to expreſſe your laſt love in performing their Funeralls; rather let the dead bury their dead: thoſe that are dead ſpiritually, let them bury ſuch as die naturally, and come go ye along with me to the Land of *Canaan*: Thus *Naomi* oughteſt thou to have ſaid, and then hadſt performed the part, done the duty of a Mother; if whilſt thou hadſt travelled with them on the way, thou hadſt travelled with them till God had been formed in them; then ſhouldſt thou ſhine as a double Sunne in heaven for ſaving of two ſouls, whereas now thou art in a manner acceſſary to their ghoſtly murther in ſending them back to an idolatrous Country.

Defence.

Defence.

To this accuſation *Naomi* might juſtly anſwer; It is my hearts deſire and prayer to God, that I may be an inſtrument of my Daughters in laws converſion; but the wiſdome of the Serpent, as well as the innocency of the Dove is to be uſed in all our actions, leaſt we draw needleſſe danger upon our ſelves. True it is, my Daughters in law proffer to go with me, but here is the queſtion; whether this is done out of courteſie and complement, or out of ſingleneſſe and ſinceritye. Now ſhould they through my perſwaſions, go into the Land of *Canaan*, and there live in want and penury, they will be ready to raile on me another day. We may thank *Naomi* for all this, we had plentifull proviſions in our own Country, but ſhe muſt have us hither; ſhe by her reſtleſſe importunitie muſt wring a conſtrained conſent from us to come into *Canaan*; all theſe miſeries are befallen upon us through her default. Yea, I am affraid, that finding want, that they again will return into their own Country to my ſhame,

the

the ſcandall of our Religion, and the deeper puniſhment of their own ſouls. Wherfore without their minds would I do nothing, that their going might not be as it were of neceſſity, but willingly. To which end I will put them to the touchſtone, to ſee whether their forwardneſſe be faithfull or faigned, ſound or ſeeming, cordiall or counterfeit; I will weigh them both in the ballance, hoping that neither ſhall be found too light.

Upon theſe Grounds learned men have acquitted *Naomi* from any fault in managing this matter, ſhe doing it onely with an intent to trie them.

Whence we may obſerve, That *Pagans* that proffer themſelves to become Converts, are not without proof preſently to be received into the Church.

And here we may take occaſion to digreſſe a little, to ſhew how Chriſtians ought to behave themſelves in the converting of Infidels.

Firſt, They muſt ſtrive in their mutuall converſing with them, to ſeaſon them with a good opinion of their honeſty and upright dealing, otherwiſe their Doctrine

Defence.

To this accusation *Naomi* might justly answer; It is my hearts desire and prayer to God, that I may be an instrument of my Daughters in laws conversion; but the wisdome of the Serpent, as well as the innocency of the Dove is to be used in all our actions, least we draw needlesse danger upon our selves. True it is, my Daughters in law proffer to go with me, but here is the question; whether this is done out of courtesie and complement, or out of singlenesse and sinceritye. Now should they through my perswasions, go into the Land of *Canaan*, and there live in want and penury, they will be ready to raile on me another day. We may thank *Naomi* for all this, we had plentifull provisions in our own Country, but she must have us hither; she by her restlesse importunitie must wring a constrained consent from us to come into *Canaan*; all these miseries are befallen upon us through her default. Yea, I am affraid, that finding want, that they again will return into their own Country to my shame,

the

the ſcandall of our Religion, and the deeper puniſhment of their own ſouls. Wherfore without their minds would I do nothing, that their going might not be as it were of neceſſity, but willingly. To which end I will put them to the touchſtone, to ſee whether their forwardneſſe be faithfull or faigned, ſound or ſeeming, cordiall or counterfeit; I will weigh them both in the ballance, hoping that neither ſhall be found too light.

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will never be embraced, whose manners are justly misliked.

Secondly, Having possessed them with this good esteem, they ought as occasion is offered, to instruct them in the Rudiments of Christian Religion; and to begin with such as are plain and evident by the light of nature, and so in due time to proceed to matters of greater difficulty.

Lastly, They are to pray to God to give his increase to their planting and watering: for, as *Athanasius* saith, *it is a divine work to perswade mens souls to believe.*

But as for the using of tortures and of torments thereby to force them, we have no such custome, nor as yet the Churches of God: for though none come to Christ but such as his Father draws by the violence of his effectuall grace; yet ought not men to drive or drag any to the profession of the Faith: yet notwithstanding, if after long patience and forbearing with them, and long instructing them in the points of Religion; if still these *Pagans* continue refractary and obstinate, then surely the civill Magistrate who hath the lawfull dominion over them, may severely

verely, though not cruelly, with *Josiah*, compell them to come to Church, and to perform the outward formalities of Gods worship.

Go then ye bloody Jesuites, boast of those many millions of *Americanes* whom you have converted, who were not converted by the sword of the mouth, gained by hearing the Gospell, but compelled by the mouth of the sword, forced by feeling your cruelty, witnesse those 70000 which without any catechising in the points of Religion, were at once driven to the Font like so many Horses to a watring Trough. Indeed I find my Saviour, *John* 2. driving the *Merchants* out of the *Temple* with a whip of cords, but never before did I read of any which against their wills drave or instructed *Pagans* to the Font to be baptized.

Each to her Mothers house.

Here we see Widows if poor, are to be maintained by their Parents if they be able. These widows, 1 *Tim.* 5. 16. were not to be burthensome to the Church, but to be relieved by their own Countrie, let

Parents therefore take heed how they beſtow their Daughters in Marriage: for if they match them to Unthrifts and Prodigals, will it not be bitterneſſe in the end? the burthen will fall heavie on their backs, when their poor Daughters with their Children muſt be ſent again to their Fathers to maintain them.

Houſe.

Widows are to contain themſelves within the *houſe*, not like the *Harlot*, *Prov.*7.12. *alwaies in the ſtreets*; but like meek *Sarah* in the *Tent*: whereby they ſhal ſooner gain the love and eſteem of others; for let baſe and beggerly fellows buy that raſcal ware which is hung out at the doors and windows of Shops and Stalls, whileſt men of qualitie and faſhion will go into the Shop to cheapen the worth of thoſe merchandiſe as are therein kept ſecret and conceal'd. And ſo ſurely all diſcreet and grave men will have the higheſt eſteem, and bear the beſt affection to ſuch Women which do not gad abroad to be ſeen, but with *Ruth* and *Orpah* being Widows, keep themſelves in their Mothers houſe.

Verſ.

Verſ. 8, 9.

The Lord ſhew favour unto you, as ye have done with the dead, and with me.

The Lord grant you, that you may finde reſt, either of you in the houſe of her Husband.

Naomi being readie to take her leave of her daughters, faine ſhe would leave them ſomething, for which they might be the better after her departure. But Gold and Silver ſhe had none, yet ſuch as ſhe had ſhe freely gave unto them (heartie prayers.) Whence we learne, It is the beſt expreſſion of a gratefull minde, to pray to God for the welfare of thoſe, at whoſe hands we have received greater courteſies then we can requite.

As ye have done.

Hence we learne, God in the rewarding of the good deeds of his ſervants, dealeth with them accordingly as they have done

with others. Yet farre be it from us to ſuppoſe, that in our ſtained and imperfect works there is any meritorious vertue, which deſerveth, that God ſhould proportion a Reward unto them: but this freely proceedeth from Gods favour; who to encourage us in well-doing, will not ſuffer a *Cup of cold water* to paſſe without its reward. Doe we deſire then to have dutifull Children, and faithfull Servants hereafter? let us be dutifull to our Parents, faithfull to our Maſters. On the other ſide, hath God afflicted us with *Zibahs* to our Servants, and with *Abſalons* to our Sonnes? let us reflect our eyes on that which is paſt, and call our ſelves to account, whether we formerly have not been unfaithfull to our Maſters, undutifull to our Parents: no doubt, we may then take up the Confeſſion of *Adoni-bezek*, *As I have dealt with others, ſo the Lord hath done to me.*

With the dead.

Queſtion.

Here ariſeth a Queſtion; How can one ſhew

ſhew favour to the dead, who being paſt ſenſe, are not capable of kindneſſe or cruelties?

Anſwer.

The *Papiſts* (who leave the ſoules of moſt men departing from hence, like *Abſalon's* body, hanging betwixt Heaven and Hell) expound it, that theſe Women did faſt and pray for the ſoules of their deceaſed Husbands, that they might be delivered from torments, and in due time brought to happineſſe in Heaven. For the confutation of which erroneous expoſition, I need ſay no more, then that the Scripture makes no mention of any ſuch middle place, wherein the ſoules of the godly ſhould be detained before they goe into Heaven; and in matters of Faith, every Chriſtian may ſafely ſay, Except I ſee in the Bible the print thereof, or can feel it deduced out of it by undenyable conſequence, I will not believe it.

It is ſtrange to ſee what impertinent places are produced by *Bellarmine*, to prove praying for the dead; as *James* 5. 16. *Confeſſe your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed*;

the effectuall fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Then he endevoureth to prove, that the dead pray for the living, from the Parable of *Dives*, *Luke* 16. 27. *I pray thee therefore Father &c.* where *Dives* was charitably ſollicitous for the good of his ſurviving *Brethren:* But let the firſt place in S. *James* be peruſed by impartiall Judgements, and it obligeth mutually the dead Saints to confeſſe to us, as well as we to them; which being impoſſible, directeth us to confine the words onely to reciprocall confeſſing and praying to and for the living.

Some will ſay, *Bellarmine* having ſufficiently proved *Purgatorie* before, (which neceſſarily inferreth prayers for the dead) he might be the briefer in that ſubject. It is confeſſed, many arguments are alledged by him to that intent, though to ſmall purpoſe; as *Pſalme* 66. 22. *We went through fire and through water, but thou broughteſt us out into a wealthie place.* We anſwer; firſt, the living there ſpeake *de præterito*, we went; not *de futuro*, we ſhall goe. Secondly, it was literally meant of the *Children* of *Iſrael*; *they went through the fire*, when

when envaſſalled to worke in the *Egyptian Brick-kills*; and *through water*, when miraculouſly they paſſed through the *Red Sea*. Again, they went through *fire*, when preſerved from the ſtinging of the *fierie*, they beheld the *Brazen Serpent*. Thirdly, if from *fire* in this Text any can kindle a *Purgatorie*, others will quench it from the word *water*, ſeeing no *Papiſts* ever fancied a *watered Purgatorie*.

They urge the place, *Matth.* 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt by no meanes come out from thence till thou haſt payd the uttermoſt farthing*; importing, ſay they, a poſſibilitie on ſatisfaction to be freed thence, that is, from *hell fire*.

Anſwer: *Until* there, is not taken *terminatively*, but *extenſively*; equivalent to *never*, or *not at all*; paralleled to that place, *Pſalme* 57. 1. *In the ſhadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, untill theſe calamities be over-paſt*. What, would *David* depart from God, after his deliverance? Would he uſe him as Travellers a Buſh? come under it in a ſtorme, and leave it in fair weather? No ſurely, *David* would truſt in God untill that time, and

at

at that time, and in that time, and after that time, and at all times. Parallel alſo to that place of *Matthew* 1. 25. *And knew her not till ſhe had brought forth her firſt-borne Sonne:* it being the conſtant Tradition of Antiquitie, according to the proportion of Faith, and embraced by the *Papiſts* themſelves, that Chriſts Mother lived and died a ſpotleſſe Virgin.

Much ſtreſſe he layeth on that paſſage of the Apoſtle, 2 *Corinth.* 3. 15. *He himſelfe ſhall be ſaved, yet ſo as by fire.* This place, ſaith *Bellarmine*, is *locus utiliſſimus & difficillimus*, moſt profitable and moſt hard.

We anſwer, firſt, in general; ſeeing by the *Jeſuit's* confeſſion it is ſo hard a place, it is utterly improbable, that *Purgatorie* (being of ſo high concernment to every ſoule as *Papiſts* would perſwade us) can be therein intended: For all matters neceſſarie for men to know and beleeve, wherein the ſafetie of every ſingle ſoule is intereſſed, (ſuch as *Purgatorie* is pretended to be) is by the confeſſion of all Divines expreſſed in plaine and pregnant Texts of Scripture; for want whereof, *Bellarmine* is faine to ſhrowd and ſhelter himſelfe

himſelfe under the moſt obſcure places, alledging a Text moſt dark and difficult, by his owne confeſſion.

Secondly, that *fire* there meant by Saint *Paul*, is affliction in this life. As for ſuch Fathers who expounded it *de igne conflagrationis*, of that *fire* which ſhould burn up all things at the end of the world; it makes nothing for the patronizing of *Purgatorie*, in the *Popiſh* notion thereof.

Come we now to finde an *Office*, and make an enquirie, how many things a *dying godly man* leaves behind him in this world: His *Soule* is ſent before him; and *Revel.* 14. 13. *From henceforth bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord.* He leaveth behind him,

Firſt, his *Body*; to which we muſt be kinde, by *Buriall* and *Lamentation.*

Secondly, his *Eſtate*; to which we muſt be kinde, by carefull and faithfull *Adminiſtration.*

Thirdly, his *Children, Friends*, or *Kindred*; to whom we muſt be kinde, by *Love* and *Affection.*

Fourthly, his *Faults* and *Failings*; to which

which we must be kinde, by *Silence* and *Suppression.*

Fifthly, his *Memorie* and *Vertues*; to which we must be kinde, by *Congratulation*, *Commemoration*, and *Imitation.*

Of these in order: For although these words, *Ye have beene kinde to the dead*, are capable of this sound sense, *You have been kinde to your Husbands, who now are dead, whilest they were living*; yet because more seemeth imported therein, we will prosecute the aforesaid Particulars.

I say, first, his *Body*; to which there is due *Buriall* and *Lamentation*: *Buriall*, and that according to the qualitie and condition wherein he lived. We reade of King *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 33. *They buried him in the chiefest* (in the *Hebrew*, *in the highest*) *Sepulchers of the sonnes of David.* It must be allowed, that the Sepulcher of *David* his Father, was higher then his; and next *David*, *Hezekiahs.* O that heighth might be but measured by true holinesse! There was an Officer amongst the *Greekes*, whose place it was to measure *Monuments* according to the *Standard* of the mens merits therein interred: Such Officers if used

in

in *England*, would pare off great parcels from ſome *Tombes*, more proportioned to the parties *Wealth* then *Vertues*. But nothing could be abated of *Hezekiah* his *Monument*, all the *Dimenſions* whereof were due to his *Devotion*.

And *Lamentation*. Surely, of all the *godly* that ever departed this Life, Gods ſervants had the leaſt cauſe to bewayl the death of S. *Steven*: For firſt, whereas there is a three-fold degree of certaintie of ſalvation; firſt, that of *Hope*, which as the leaſt and loweſt, ſcarce deſerveth to be ſtyled Certaintie; ſecondly, that of *Evidence*, whereby the perſon clearely in his ſoule apprehendeth Gods favour; thirdly, that of *Viſion*, peculiar to this *Steven* alone, antedating his happineſſe with his bodily eyes, being in Heaven before he was in Heaven: ſo that as many gates in his wounded body ſtood open to let out his ſoule, he beheld alive the Heavens opened to receive it.

And yet we reade, *Act.* 8. 2. *And devout men carryed Steven to his Buriall, and made great lamentation over him.* Obſerve; it was not ſaid, *they made great lamentation for*

for him, but *over him*; they knew him in a happy condition: It was themselves they bemoaned in his death, the sight of his Corps sharpening their sorrow, that the *Infant-Church* had lost one of her best swadling-clothes.

Secondly, his *Estate*; to which we must be kinde, by carefull and faithfull *Administration*. *Heb.* 9. 17. *For a Testament is of force after men are dead.* *Gal.* 3. 15. *Though it be but a mans Covenant*, or Testament, *yet if it be confirmed, no man disanulleth or addeth thereto.* NO MAN? He must either be lesse then man in knowledge, a *meere Beast*; or more then man in malice, a *meere Devill*. By *Testament* I understand not onely the very words thereof, but also what appeareth to be the *Testator* his Will to the Conscience of the Executor. How many in this kinde are cruell to the dead? So that some of the Legacies bequeathed by them, have had a *Thumbe* or a *Toe*, yea, some an *Arme* or *a Legge* cut off from them. Many Legacies which came *sound* forth from the *Testator*, before they could get through the *Executors* have beene more *lame*, and *maimed*, then

then the Criples in the Hoſpitall, to whom they have beene bequeathed.

Thirdly, his *Children*, or (becauſe *Mahlon* and *Chilion* had none of them) his *Kindred* or *Friends*; to whom the living muſt be kinde, with *Love* and *Affection*. Remember the Character of the good Wife, *Proverbs* 31. 12. *She will doe her Husband good, and not evill, all the dayes of her life.* We have many *Wives* onely negatively *good*, pleaſing and prayſing themſelves in this, that they doe their *Husbands* no hurt. This will not doe the deed, they muſt be poſitively profitable. Nor is it ſaid, *all the dayes of his life*, but *all the dayes of her life*. What if he dieth, her obligation to him is not *caſſated* or *nulled*, (as many *Wives* generally conceive) but ſtill continueth *all the dayes of her life*. True it is, ſhe is ſet free ſo farre, as ſhe may marry againe in a competent time, without the leaſt ſhadow of ſinne; yet ſo, as ſtill obliged to doe good all her life time to the *Friends*, to the *Children* (if any) of her dead *Husband*; and he, if ſurviving her, reciprocally engaged to doe the like.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, the best men leave *Faults* and *Failings* behind them; to these the living must be kinde, by *silence* and *suppression*.

First, of those of whom thou canst say no good, say nothing.

Secondly, of those of whom thou canst say some good, say no bad.

David is a most excellent instance hereof, 2 *Sam.* 1. 24. Who could more, or more justly have inveighed against *Saul* then *David*? *O ye Daughters of Israel, rejoyce for the death of so great a Tyrant, who killed Ahimelech the High Priest, and fourescore more of Gods Priests, whose soules were as cleare from Treason as the white Linnen Ephod they wore were from spots: Twice I had him at my mercy, once in the Cave, once when asleepe; yet he (notwithstanding all his faire promises to the contrarie) was the more cruell to me for my kindnesse to him.* No such matter; *David* conceales what was bad, remembreth what was good in *Saul*, at leastwise what would make his memorie acceptable with the weaker Sex; namely, his making of Gallantrie fashionable amongst them: *Ye Daughters of Israel weepe over Saul, who clothed you in*

in Scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of Gold upon your apparell.

Fifthly, *Memorie* of his *Vertues:* To which three things are due, to make thee kinde thereunto.

First, *Congratulation.* I will touch this ſtring but tenderly; not ſo much becauſe fearing mine owne fingers, (as if the Leſſon ſhould be falſe I play thereon) but expecting other mens eares as ill-diſpoſed with prejudice. It is no *Poperie*, nor Superſtition, to prayſe God for the happie condition of his ſervants departed; the ancient *Patriarchs*, the inſpired *Prophets*, the holy *Apoſtles*, the patient *Martyrs*, the Religious *Confeſſors.* When the Tribe of *Ruben*, *Gad*, and halfe *Manaſſes*, erected the Altar ED at the paſſage over *Jordan*, it ſtartled all the reſt of the Tribes, as if under it they had hatched ſome ſuperſtitious deſigne; whereas indeed, the Altar was not intended for *Sacrifice*, but was meerely an Altar of *Memorial*, to evidence to poſteritie, that theſe two Tribes and an halfe (though divided from the reſt by the River of *Jordan*) were

conjoyned with them in the worſhip of the ſame God. In like manner, when ſome Miniſters thank God for the departure of his ſervants, ſome people are ſo weake, and ſome ſo wilfull, to condemne ſuch for paſſages of *Poperie*, as if ſuperſtitious prayers were made for their departure: whereas, indeed, ſuch *Congratulation*, on the contrarie, ſpeakes our confidence on their preſent bliſſe and happineſſe, and continueth the *Church Militant* with the *Church Triumphant*, as the compleating one intire *Catholike Church* of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Secondly, *Commemoration* is due to the *Memories* of the deceaſed. Hence the ancient cuſtome of *Funerall Orations* continued in our moderne practice, both to the honour of the dead, and profit of the living.

Thirdly, *Imitation* of their *Vertues*. It hath been a great Queſtion amongſt ſuch who deſire to expreſſe themſelves thankfull to their dead *Anceſtors*, of what *Metall*, or *Matter* to make their *Monuments* ſo as they may be moſt laſting and permanent. Wiſe men have generally decryed

decryed *Silver* and *Braſſe*; not ſo much, becauſe too coſtly, (ſuch may be the worth and wealth of the *Executors* and partie deceaſed) but too tempting to *Sacriledge* to demoliſh them. *Braſſe* is generally ſubject to the ſame miſchiefe, and *Marble Touch* and *Alablaſter*, are generally uſed for that purpoſe; but the *Monument* leſſe ſubject to Caſualtie, is, to *imitate* the *Vertues* of our dead *Friends*: in other *Tombes* the dead are preſerved; in theſe, they may be ſaid to remaine alive.

When we ſee a Child very like to the Father and Mother thereof, we uſe to ſay, *Thy Father will never be dead as long as thou liveſt.* Thus it is the beſt remembrance of our dead *Progenitors*, to follow their *Vertues*. S. *Paul* cannot looke upon *Timothy*, but preſently calls to minde his Mother *Eunice*, and his Grandmother *Lois*, though the latter no doubt long ſince departed.

The Lord grant, that you may finde reſt, each of you in the houſe of her Husband.

Here we may obſerve, firſt, that it is the part of pious Parents to pray to God for

conjoyned with them in the worſhip of the ſame God. In like manner, when ſome Miniſters thank God for the departure of his ſervants, ſome people are ſo weake, and ſome ſo wilfull, to condemne ſuch for paſſages of *Poperie*, as if ſuperſtitious prayers were made for their departure: whereas, indeed, ſuch *Congratulation*, on the contrarie, ſpeakes our confidence on their preſent bliſſe and happineſſe, and continueth the *Church Militant* with the *Church Triumphant*, as the compleating one intire *Catholike Church* of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

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The Lord grant, that you may finde reſt, each of you in the houſe of her Husband.

Here we may obſerve, firſt, that it is the part of pious Parents to pray to God for

the good ſucceſſe of their Children, eſpecially in the matter of their Marriage: example in *Abraham*, *Gen.* 24. 7. Secondly, hence we may gather, that the Life of married perſons meeting together in the feare of God, is *Reſt*.

Objection.

How then commeth it to paſſe, that many men and women may take up the words of *Rebecca*, *Seeing it is ſo, why am I thus? Gen.* 25. If the married Life be *Reſt*, how commeth it to prove my Purgatorie, my Hell, my cauſe of reſtleſſe Torment? Men and women were joyned in Marriage, *Gen.* 2. to the end to be a mutuall *helpe* one to the other, but many prove ſuch helpers as the King of *Aſſur* did to *Ahaz*, 2 *Chron.* 28. of whom it is ſaid, he diſtreſſed him, but helped him not.

Anſwer.

Who can hinder it, if men of their Girdles and Garters make Halters to hang themſelves? If thoſe things which ſhould be for their ſtrength and ornament, be through their owne default turned to

their

their utter undoing; the estate of Marriage is not herein to be blamed, but the folly of such who out of some sinister ends undertake it. Happily some chuse their Wives like as our Grandmother *Eve* did the Apple, because they are pleasant to the eyes to be lookt upon: others out of a love of their Wealth, saying of their Wives what the *Sichemites* did of the sonnes of *Jacob*, *Shall not all their Heards and Cattell be ours?* Whereas if Grace and Pietie were principally respected in their Choice, (other outward accommodations in their due distance not neglected) they would finde the truth of our observation, that a married Life is *Rest*. For though some pettie Brawles may happen amongst the most sanctified Couple, which may move their anger, yet shall it not remove their love, if one with Christian discretion beareth with the infirmities of the other. *Joab* made this compact with his Brother *Abishai*, 2 *Sam.* 10. 11. *If the Aramite be stronger then I, thou shalt helpe me; but if the Ammonites be too strong for thee, I will come and succour thee.* Thus ought Man and Wife to

make a Bargaine with their beſt Councell to, and prayers for each other, to aſſiſt themſelves mutually againſt their ſundry weakneſſes and infirmities, which otherwiſe would turne their *Reſt* of their Life into unquietneſſe.

Verſ. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

And when ſhe kiſſed them, they liſt up their voices, and wept.

And they ſaid unto her, Surely, we will returne with thee, unto thy people.

But Naomi *ſaid, Turne againe my daughters: for what cauſe will you goe with me? Are there any more ſonnes in my Wombe, that they may be your* Husbands?

Turne againe my daughters, goe your way, for I am too old to have an Husband: If I ſhould ſay, I have hope; and if I had an Husband

band this night; yea, if I had borne ſonnes:

Would you tarry for them while they were of age? Would you be deferred for them from taking of Husbands? Nay my daughters, for it grieveth me much for your ſakes, that the hand of the Lord is gone out againſt me.

And when ſhe kiſſed them.

KIſſes was the ordinarie ſalutation of the *Iewes* at the meeting of acquaintance, men with men, women with women, men with women; provided, that then they were of neere kindred, to avoid all ſuſpition of unchaſtitie.

And they lift up their voices, and wept.

The obſervation here, may be the ſame which the *Iewes* collected, *Iohn* 11. which when they ſaw our Saviour weepe for *Lazarus*, they ſaid, *Behold how he loved him.*

So theſe teares in this place were the expreſſion of their affection. Sorrow like the River of *Iordan*, 1 *Chron.* 12. *in the firſt moneth did overflow the bankes*, and ſtreamed water downe their cheekes.

But Naomi *ſaid, Turne againe my daughters, &c.*

In theſe words, ſhe diſſwadeth her daughters in law from returning with her; the ſtrength of her Reaſon, contained in three Verſes, may thus be ſet downe, as if ſhe had ſaid: Happily daughters you have heard, that it is the cuſtome in the Land of *Canaan*, for Childleſſe Widowes to marry their deceaſed Husbands Brothers; But if your returne be grounded hereon, know, that you build your hopes on a falſe foundation, it being impoſſible for me, by the courſe of Nature, to have *any more ſonnes*. Who will looke, that Water ſhould flow from a drie Fountain, Grapes grow on a withered Vine, Fruit flouriſh on a dead Figge-tree? Though *Sarah* at 90 was made a Mother, though *Aaron's* Rod did bud and bloſſome when it was drie; I my ſelfe ſhould be a Miracle, if I ſhould

ſhould expect ſuch a Miracle: and therefore know, that *there are no more ſonnes in my Wombe.*

Doctrine.

Now whereas *Naomi* dealeth thus plainly with her daughters, not feeding them with falſe hopes, it teacheth us this: We ought not to gull our friends with the promiſes of thoſe things that neither will nor can come to paſſe. Otherwiſe we ſhall both wrong our friends, who the higher they are mounted upon the Hill of ſeeming hopes, at length the deeper they will be caſt into the Dale of reall deſpaire; and alſo we ſhall wrong our ſelves; when Time, the Mother of Truth, ſhall unmaske us, we ſhall prove our ſelves to be no better then Lyars and Cheaters.

Uſe.

Let us labour to be *Nathanaels*, true *Iſraelites, in whom there is no guile*; and as *John Baptiſt*, when as the *Phariſes* asked him, whether he was the Chriſt, or no? *John* 1. 20. he *confeſſed, and denyed not*, and ſaid plainly, *I am not the Chriſt*: So if we neither meane to doe, nor know, that

that ſuch things cannot be done which our friends requeſt of us; let us confeſſe, denie not, and ſay plainly, that their ſuites cannot, ſhall not be granted; and by ſuch downe-right dealing, we ſhall at laſt get more favour from them, then they who flatter them with their tongue. Let not the Phyſician, when he reades in the Urinall thoſe diſmal ſymptomes, which are the Uſhers of Death, ſtill promiſe Life and Health unto his Patient; but plainly tell him, that there is *Mors in olla*; that ſo he may flye unto the Phyſician of the Soule, for a better Life, when this ſhall fade. Let not the Lawyer, when he knowes the Caſe is deſperate, feed his Clyent with falſe hopes to recover it, that ſo from him he may be fed with Money; but rather let him adviſe him to *agree with his adverſarie while he is in the way*; that though he cannot get the Conqueſt, yet he may have the eaſier Compoſition.

For I am too old to have a Husband.

Here ariſeth a Queſtion.

Queſt.

Queſtion.

Is there any Age ſo old, wherein a man or woman may not marry?

Anſwer.

Naomies meaning was not ſimply and abſolutely, that ſhe was too old to marry, but ſhe was too old to have a Husband, and by a Husband to have Children, and that thoſe Children ſhould grow up, and make fit Husbands for *Orpah* and *Ruth*. Yet by the way, I would adviſe ſuch who are ſtricken in yeares, eſpecially if impotencie be added unto Age, and that it may ſtand with their conveniencie, to refraine from all thoughts of a ſecond Marriage, and to expect that happie day, when Death ſhall ſolemnize the Nuptiall betwixt their Soule and their Saviour. For when *Barzillai* hath counted 80 yeares, he hath even had enough of the pleaſure and vanitie of the world; let him retire himſelfe to a private life, and not envie his ſonne *Cimcham* to ſucceed to thoſe delights, of which his Age hath made his Father uncapable. Yet if any ancient perſons,

ſons, for their mutuall comfort and ſocietie, (which is not the leaſt end for which Marriage was ordained) are diſpoſed to match themſelves herein, they are blameleſſe; eſpecially, if they have a care to obſerve a correſpondencie of Age with thoſe to whom they linke themſelves. Otherwiſe, as our Saviour noteth, when the old Cloth was joyned to the new, it made no good medley, but the Rent was made the worſe: So when the Spring of Youth is wedded to the Winter of Age, no true comfort can ariſe from ſuch unequall Yokes, but much jealouſie and ſuſpition are cauſed from the ſame.

Would ye tarry for them?

That is, you would not tarry for them; or if you ſhould tarry for them, you ſhould wrong your ſelves, and doe unadviſedly; becauſe in the mean time refraining from the uſing of Gods Ordinance, you expoſe your ſelves to the Devill, to tempt you to incontinencie. Therefore S. *Pauls* councell is good which he preſcribes in 1 *Tim.* 5. 14. *I will therefore that the younger Women, &c.*

While

While they were of age.

Note from hence, that Children are not to be married in their Non-age, before they are arrived at yeares of diſcretion: *Thamar* Gen. 38. is to wait till *Selah* be grown up. Thoſe Parents are therefore to be blamed, who out of by-reſpects, match their Children in their infancie. Whence it commeth to paſſe, that as their age doth increaſe, their minde doth alter: ſo what formerly they did like, afterwards they do loath, ſuch Marriages proving commonly moſt inſucceſsfull.

Nay, my Daughters: for it grieveth me much for your ſakes.

As if ſhe had ſaid, It grieveth me much that you are already plunged into povertie; but it would add more to my ſorrow, if you ſhould increaſe your calamities by returning home with me; for mine own part, my miſery troubleth me not ſo much, becauſe the Sun of my life is readie to ſet, and it mattereth not though the Ship be ſcanted of Victuals, when it is hard by the Harbour; all my care is for you

you who are young women, and ſtand upon your own preferment; it grieveth me much for your ſakes.

Doctrine.

See here, Such is the ingenuous nature of Gods Children, that they ſorrow more for others that are inwrapped with them in a common calamitie, then for themſelves. Example in *Elias*, 1 *King.* 17. 20. But then it goeth neareſt to their heart, when others are not onely afflicted with them, but alſo for them, when they themſelves are the principall Malefactors for whoſe defaults others are puniſh't, as in *David*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 17.

Uſes.

It may confute the devilliſh nature of ſuch, who being in Trouble, care not though they pawne their deareſt friends in their ſtead, ſo be it they themſelves may eſcape. And it may alſo ſerve to comfort thoſe that are in diſtreſſe, when God onely layeth his puniſhments on them alone, and doth not involve others together with them. Art thou afflicted with povertie?

vertie? Comfort thy ſelfe, that though thou beeſt poore, yet thou haſt undone none by Suretiſhip for thee. Art thou in ſickneſſe? Be glad that thy Diſeaſe is not infectious, and that thou haſt not derived the contagion to others. Doth God puniſh thee for thy ſinne with a perſonall puniſhment? Be glad that thou beareſt the weight of thine owne offence, and that thou art not the *Ionah*, for whoſe private ſinne a whole Ship of Paſſengers is endangered to be caſt away; for then their caſe would grieve thee more then thine owne calamitie.

That the hand of the Lord.

Naomi here taketh eſpeciall notice, that her Loſſes proceedeth from no other by-cauſes, but from the hand of God. As *David* therefore asked the Widow of *Tekoah*, 2 *Sam.* 14. *Is not the hand of* Joab *with thee in all this?* So when any affliction befalleth us, let us preſently have recourſe unto God, and ſay, *Is not the hand of the Lord the principall cauſe hereof?* And not with the Prieſts of the *Philiſtims* ſay, *It was a chance that happened us.*

Is

Is gone out againſt me.

Obſerv.

Hence we may obſerve, every Saint of God, in a common calamitie, is to thinke, that God aimed at his puniſhment, and intended his reformation in particular. *The hand of the Lord* was gone out alſo againſt *Orpah* and *Ruth*, in taking away their Husbands; yet *Naomi* appropriateth the ſtroake to her ſelfe, *Is gone out againſt me.*

How contrarie is this to the practice of the world? Men in a publike and a generall affliction, each ſhifteth it off from themſelves, and no one man will be brought to confeſſe that his ſinnes are puniſhed, or his amendment intended in particular, if the Scourge be univerſall. As the *Philiſtims*, 1 *Sam.* 5. poſted the Ark of God from *Aſhdod* to *Ekron*, from one place to another, and none would receive it: So, in a common Calamitie, none will acknowledge, that he himſelfe is eſpecially intereſted in it, but plead, *What is that to us? Let others looke unto it.* O, ſaith the

the people, *God hath juſtly ſent this Plague for the corruption of the Magiſtrates; It is juſtly inflicted,* ſaith the Magiſtrate, *for the diſobedience of the people: Herein*, ſaith the poore man, *God hath met with the oppreſſion and extortion of the Rich; Herein*, ſaith the rich man, *God hath payed home the muttering & the repining of the Poore: Now*, ſaith the prodigall, *God puniſheth the covetouſneſſe of Old men; Now*, ſaith the old man, *he ſcourgeth the prodigalitie of ſuch as be Young.* Farre otherwiſe *Naomi*, who though the Arrowes of God did glance and rebound, to the wounding of *Orpah* and *Ruth*, yet ſhe thought ſhe her ſelfe was the Mark at whom God did levell his Shafts; *The hand of the Lord is gone out againſt me.*

Verſ. 14.

And Orpah *kiſſed her mother in law, but* Ruth *clave unto her.*

THeſe words containe two generall parts:

Firſt, A blazing Meteor falling downe out of the Ayre; *And* Orpah, *&c.*

Secondly, A fixed Starre fairely ſhining in the Heaven; *But* Ruth, *&c.*

And Orpah *kiſſed her mother.*

Is this ſhe which even now was ſo promiſing in her words, and ſo paſſionate in her weeping? See how ſoone a forward Profeſſor may turne to a fearefull Apoſtate: Though ſhe ſtandeth or falleth to her own Maſter, yet as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *I am horribly afraid for thoſe that forſake thy Law*; ſo have we juſt cauſe to ſuſpect the fearefull finall eſtate of *Orpah*.

Kiſſed her mother.

That is, gave her this laſt ſalutation of her departure. Here we ſee, that thoſe who want grace and true ſanctitie, may notwithſtanding have manners and good civilitie. Now had *Orpah* changed the corporall Kiſſe ſhe gave to her mother, into a ſpirituall Kiſſe to her Saviour, *Pſal.* 2. *Kiſſe the Sonne, leſt he be angry*, her caſe had been as happie as now it may ſeeme to be hopeleſſe. But leaving her, we come to our ſelves, and gather this Doctrine.

Doctrine.

Doctrine.

Thoſe who at the firſt were forward in Religion, may afterward altogether fall away, 1 *Tim.*1.20. *Heb.*6.4. *Matth.*13.20. It may therefore ſerve to abate the proud carriage of ſuch, who as if it were not enough to be ſure, will alſo be preſumptuous of their ſalvation, and thereby take leave and libertie to themſelves to live more licentiouſly.

Objection.

But as once one of the Children of the Prophets cryed out to *Eliſha, O man of God, there is Death in the Pot*; ſo may the weak Chriſtian complaine againſt this Doctrine: O it is a deadly and dangerous one, containing much matter of deſpaire, too bitter for the pallat of a poore Chriſtian to taſte, or his ſtomack to digeſt; it quencheth all the ſparkes of my comfort, and hacketh aſunder all the ſinewes of my hope; I feare, leſt *Orpah*-like, I alſo ſhould fall away: what ſhall I doe, that I may be ſaved?

Anſwer.

Let not the *ſmoaking Flax* be diſmay'd, which in time may be a *blazing flame*; nor the *bruiſed Reed* be diſcouraged, which may prove a *Brazen Pillar* in the Temple of God: That therefore thou mayeſt finally perſevere, obſerve theſe foure Rules.

1 *Rule.*

Firſt, utterly renounce all ſufficiencie in thy ſelfe. Who but a mad man will now adayes warrant the Paper-Shields of his owne ſtrength, that knowes that *Adams* compleat Armour of Original Integritie, was ſhot thorow in *Paradiſe.*

2 *Rule.*

Secondly, place all thy confidence on the undeſerved mercie of God: Perſeverance commeth neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor as yet from the South; but God ſuffereth one to fall, and holdeth up another. The Temple of *Solomon* had two Pillars; one called *Jachin*, ſounding in Hebrew, *The Lord will ſtabliſh*; the other *Booz*, ſignified, *In him is ſtrength*:

So

So every Chriſtian (*the Temple of the Holy-Ghoſt*) is principally holden up by theſe two Pillars, Gods Power, and Will, to ſupport him. Wherefore in every diſtreſſe let us crie out to God, as the Diſciples did to our Saviour, in the midſt of a Tempeſt, *Helpe Maſter, or elſe we periſh.*

3 *Rule.*

Thirdly, uſe all thoſe means which God hath chalked out for the encreaſe of grace in thee; as Prayer, Meditation, reverent receiving the Sacraments, accompanying with Gods Children, Reading, Hearing the Word, &c.

4 *Rule.*

Fourthly, alwayes preſerve in thy ſelfe an awfull feare, leſt thou ſhouldſt fall away from God: Feare to fall, and Aſſurance to ſtand, are two Siſters; and though *Cain* ſaid, he was not his *Brothers keeper*, ſure I am, that this Feare doth watch and guard her Siſter Aſſurance: *Tantus eſt gradus certitudinis, quantus ſollicitudinis:* They that have much of this Feare, have much certaintie; they that have little, little certaintie; they that have none,

have none at all, It is ſaid in Building, that thoſe Chimneyes which ſhake moſt, and give way to the wind, will ſtand the longeſt: The Morall in Divinitie is true; Thoſe Chriſtians that ſhiver for feare by ſinnes to fall away, may be obſerved moſt couragious to perſiſt in Pietie.

Comfort.

To thoſe that diligently practiſe theſe Rules, I will adde this Comfort: Encourage thy ſelfe, that God will keepe thee from Apoſtaſie unto the end, becauſe alreadie hitherto he hath preſerved thee: For Gods former favours are pawnes and pledges of his future love. *Davids* killing of a Lyon and a Beare, were the Earneſts of his Victorie over *Goliah*. Thus S. *Paul* reaſoneth, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we truſt that he will yet deliver us.* When *Rachel* bare her firſt ſonne, *Gen.* 30. ſhe called him *Joſeph*, and ſaid, *The Lord ſhall adde to me another ſonne.* So, when God hath alreadie bleſſed us and ſupported us for the time paſt, let us ſay with *Rachel*, *Joſeph, the Lord will adde*: he will not

not ſtay, or ſtint, or ſtop here; but as he hath kept me from my mothers wombe, and ever ſince I was borne, ſo I truſt he will not forſake me when I am aged, and full of gray haires.

But to returne to her which returned againe to *Moab:* We reade in 2 *Sam.* 20. that the people which paſſed by the Corps of murthered *Amaſa*, being moved with ſuch a hideous and uncouth a ſpectacle, they ſtood ſtill: But when we reade this Booke of *Ruth*, and come to *Orpahs* Apoſtaſie, there let us a while pauſe and demurre, to reade in her fall a Lecture of our owne infirmitie. For if we ſtand, it is not becauſe we have more might in our ſelves, but becauſe God hath more mercie on us. Let us therefore *worke out our ſalvation with feare and trembling:* ever *trembling*, leſt we ſhould be caſt to Hell; ever triumphing, that we ſhall come to Heaven: ever *fearfull*, leſt we ſhould fall; ever certaine, that we ſhall ſtand; ever carefull, leſt we ſhould be damned; ever chearfull, that we ſhall be ſaved. Concerning *Ruths* perſeverance, we intend to treat hereafter.

Verſ. 15.

And Naomi *ſaid, Behold, thy ſiſter in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods; returne thou after thy ſiſter in law.*

IN theſe words, *Naomi* ſeekes to perſwade *Ruth* to returne; alledging the example of *Orpah*, whom ſhe ſaith was *gone back to her people and to her gods.*

Obſervation.

Where firſt we finde, that all the Heathen, and the *Moabites* amongſt the reſt, did not acknowledge one true God, but were the worſhippers of many gods; for they made every Attribute of God to be a diſtinct Deitie. Thus in ſtead of that Attribute, the Wiſdome of God, they fained *Apollo* the god of Wiſdome; in ſtead of the Power of God, they made *Mars* the god of Power; in ſtead of that admirable Beautie of God, they had *Venus* the goddeſſe of Beautie. But no one Attribute

was

was ſo much abuſed as Gods Providence: For the Heathen ſuppoſing that the whole World, and all the Creatures therein, was too great a Dioceſſe to be dayly viſited by one and the ſame Deitie; they therefore aſſigned ſundry gods to ſeverall creatures. Thus Gods Providence, in ruling the raging of the Seas, was counted *Neptune*; in ſtilling the roaring Winds, *Æolus*; in commanding the Powers of Hell, *Pluto*: yea, Sheepe had their *Pan*, and Gardens their *Pomona*: the Heathens then being as fruitfull in faining of gods, as the *Papiſts* ſince in making of Saints.

Doctrine.

Now, becauſe *Naomi* uſed the example of *Orpah* as a Motive, to worke upon *Ruth* to returne, we gather from thence; Examples of others ſet before our eyes, are very potent and prevalent arguments to make us follow and imitate them: Whether they be good examples; ſo the forwardneſſe of the *Corinthians* to relieve the *Jews*, provoked many: or whether they be bad; ſo the diſſembling of *Peter* at *Anticch* drew *Barnabas*, and others, into the

the ſame fault. But thoſe examples, of all others, are moſt forcible with us, which are ſet by ſuch who are neere to us by kindred, or gracious with us in friendſhip, or great over us in power.

Vſe 1.

Let men in eminent places, as Magiſtrates, Miniſters, Fathers, Maſters, and the like, (ſeeing that others love to dance after their Pipe, to ſing after their Tune, to tread after their Tract) endeavour to propound themſelves patternes of Pietie and Religion to thoſe that be under them.

Vſe 2.

When we ſee any good example propounded unto us, let us ſtrive with all poſſible ſpeed to imitate it. What a deale of ſtirre is there in the World for Civill Precedencie, and Prioritie? Every one deſires to march in the Fore-front, and thinkes it a ſhame to come lagging in the Rere-ward. Oh, that there were ſuch an holy Ambition and heavenly Emulation in our hearts, that as *Peter* and *Iohn* ran a Race, which ſhould come firſt to the

Grave

Grave of our Saviour; ſo men would contend, who ſhould firſt attaine to true Mortification. And when we ſee a good example ſet before us, let us imitate it, though it be in one who in outward reſpects is farre our inferiour. Shall not the Maſter be aſhamed to ſee that his Man, whoſe place on Earth is to come behinde him, in Pietie towards Heaven to goe before him? Shall not the Husband bluſh to ſee his Wife, which is the weaker Veſſel in Nature, to be the ſtronger Veſſel in Grace? Shall not the elder Brother dye his cheekes with the Colour of Vertue, to ſee his younger Brother, who was laſt borne, firſt re-borne by Faith and the Holy-Ghoſt? Yet let him not therefore envie his Brother, as *Cain* did *Abel*; let him not be angry with his Brother, becauſe he is better then himſelfe; but let him be angry with himſelfe, becauſe he is worſe then his Brother; let him turne all his malice into imitation; all his fretting at him, into following of him: Say unto him as *Gehazi* did of *Naaman*, *As the Lord liveth I will run after him:* And though thou canſt not over-run him, nor as yet

over-

over-take him, yet give not over to run with him; follow him, though not as *Azahel* did *Abner*, hard at the heeles; yet as *Peter* did our Saviour, *afarre off:* that though the more ſlowly, yet as ſurely thou mayeſt come to Heaven: and though thou wert ſhort of him whileſt he lived, in the Race, yet thou ſhalt be even with him when thou art dead, at the Marke.

Uſe 3.

When any bad Example is preſented unto us, let us decline and deteſt it, though the men be never ſo many, or ſo dear unto us. Imitate *Michaiah*, 1 *Kings* 22. to whom when the meſſengers ſent to fetch him, ſaid, *Behold now the words of the Prophets declare good to the King with one mouth: let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like to one of them*; *Michaiah* anſwered, *As the Lord liveth, whatſoever the Lord ſaith unto me, that will I ſpeake.* If they be never ſo deare unto us, we muſt not follow their bad practice. So muſt the ſonne pleaſe him that begat him, that he doe not diſpleaſe him that created him; ſo muſt the Wife follow him that married her, that

ſhe

ſhe doth not offend him that made her. Wherefore as *Samſon*, though bound with new Cords, ſnapt them aſunder as Towe when it feeleth the fire; ſo rather then we ſhould be led by the lewd examples of thoſe which be neere and deare unto us, let us breake in pieces all Tyes, Engagements, Relations whatſoever.

Queſtion.

Yea but one may ſay, What if I finde in the Scripture an action recorded, whoſe doer is knowne to have beene a godly and gracious man; may I not, without any further doubt, or ſcruple, follow the ſame?

Anſwer.

For the better ſatisfying hereof, I will ranke the actions of godly men, regiſtred in the Scriptures, into nine ſeverall rankes, and will ſhew how farre forth we may ſafely proceed in the imitation of them.

1. We finde ſome actions ſet downe which are extraordinary, the doers whereof had peculiar ſtrength and diſpenſation from God to doe them. Thus *Samſon* ſlew

ſlew himſelfe and the *Philiſtims* in the Temple of *Dagon*; *Elias* cauſed *fire* to deſcend on the two Captaines, and their fifties; *Eliſha* curſed the Children of *Bethel*. Now theſe are recorded rather for our inſtruction, then imitation: For when the ſonnes of *Thunder* would have been the ſonnes of *Lightning*, and have had *fire from Heaven* to burne the *Samaritans*, which refuſed to receive our Saviour, after the example of *Elias* Chriſt checked their ill-tempered Zeale, and told them, *You know not of what ſpirit you are of.*

2. Some examples are ſet down which are founded in the Ceremonial Law, as the eating of the *Paſchall Lamb*, the *Circumciſing of their Children* the eight daie: Now the date of theſe did expire at the death of Chriſt; the ſubſtance being come, the ſhadows are fled, and therefore they may in no wiſe ſtill be obſerved.

3. Such examples as are founded in the Judicial Law, which was onely calculated for the elevation of the Jewiſh Commonwealth, as to put Men to death for Adulterie. Now theſe examples tie us no farther to imitate them, then they agree with the

the Moral Law, or with thoſe Statutes by which every particular Countrie is Governed.

4. Some there be founded in no Law at all, but onely in an ancient cuſtome by God tolerated and connived at, as Polygamie in the *Patriarks*, Divorces in the *Iewes* upon every ſlight occaſion; from theſe alſo we muſt in theſe daies abſtaine, as which were never liked or allowed by God, though permitted in ſome Perſons, and Ages, for ſome ſpeciall reaſons.

5. Doubtful examples which may ſo be termed, becauſe it is difficult to decide whether the Actors of them therein did offend or no; ſo that ſhould a Jurie of learned Writers be empannelled to paſſe their verdict upon them, they would be puzled whether to condemn or acquit them, and at length be forced to find it an *Ignoramus*, as whether *David* did well to diſſemble himſelfe frantick, thereby to eſcape the crueltie of *Achiſh* King of *Gath*. Now our moſt adviſed way herein, is altogether to abſtain from the imitation of them, becauſe there is a deal of difficultie

and

and danger; and our judgements may eaſilie be deceived.

6. Mixt examples, which containe in them a double action; the one good, the other bad, both ſo cloſely couched together, that it is a very hard thing to ſever them: thus in the unjuſt Steward, there was his wiſdome to provide for himſelfe, and his wickedneſſe to purloyne from his Maſter: the firſt God did commend, we may imitate; the latter he could not but loath, we may not but ſhun. In the *Iſraelitiſh Midwives*, Exod. 1. there was *fides mentis & fallacia mentientis*: the faith of their love, and the falſeneſſe of their lying: the firſt God rewarded, and we may follow; the latter he could not but diſlike, and we muſt deteſt. Behold here is wiſdome, and let the Man that hath underſtanding diſcreetly divide betwixt the Droſſe and the Gold, the Chaffe and the Wheat in theſe mixt examples, that ſo they may practice the one, eſchew and avoid the other.

7. Thoſe which be abſolutely bad, that no charitable Comment can be faſtened upon them, as the drunkenneſs of *Noah*, the

the inceſt of *Lot*, the lying of *Abraham*, the ſwearing of *Joſeph*, the adulterie of *David*, the denial of *Peter*: Now God forbid we ſhould imitate theſe; farre be it from us with King *Ahaz*, to take a pattern from the Idolatrous Altar of *Damaſcus*: the Holy Spirit hath not ſet theſe ſinnes down with an intent they ſhould be followed; but firſt to ſhew the frailtie of his deareſt Saints, when he leaves them to themſelves; as alſo to comfort us when we fall into grievous ſinnes, when we ſee that as haynous offences of Gods ſervants ſtand upon record in the Scripture.

8. Actions which are only good as they are qualified with ſuch a circumſtance, as *Davids* eating of the *Shew-bread*, provided for the Prieſts, in a caſe of abſolute neceſſitie. Theſe we may follow, but then we muſt have a ſpeciall eye and care that the ſame qualifying circumſtance be in us, for otherwiſe the deed will be impious and damnable.

9. Examples abſolutely good, as the faithfulneſſe of *Abraham*, the peaceable-

neſſe of *Iſaac*, the painfulneſſe of *Iacob*, the chaſtitie of *Ioſeph*, the patience of *Moſes*, the valour of *Ioſhuah*, the ſinceritie of *David*, theſe it is lawful and laudable with our beſt endeavours to imitate: follow not the Adulterie of *David*, but follow the chaſtitie of *Ioſeph*; follow not the diſſembling of *Peter*, but follow the ſincerity of *Nathaniel*; follow not the teſtineſs of *Ionah*, but follow the meekneſſe *Moſes*; follow not the apoſtaſie of *Orpah*, but follow the perſeverance of *Ruth*, which comes in the next Text to be Treated of.

Verſ. 16, 17.

And Ruth *anſwered, Intreat me not to leave thee, nor to depart from thee; for whither thou goeſt, I will goe; and where thou dwelleſt, I will dwell: thy people ſhall be my people, and thy God my God.*

Where

Where thou dieſt, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord doe ſo to me, and more alſo, if ought but death part thee and me.

HEre we have the reſolution of *Ruth* portrayed in lively Colours: ſo that if we conſider her Sex, a Woman; her Nation, a *Moabite*; one may boldly pronounce of her what our Saviour did of the Centurion; *Verily I ſay unto you, I have not found ſo great faith, no, not in Iſrael.*

Intreat me not to leave thee.

Some reade it, *Be not thou againſt me*, as it is in the Margent of the New Tranſlation. Where we ſee, that thoſe are to be accounted our Adverſaries, and againſt us, who diſſwade us from our Voyage to *Canaan*, from going to Gods true Religion. They may be our Fathers, they cannot be our Friends; though they promiſe us all outward profits and pleaſures, yet in very deed they are not with us, but againſt us, and ſo muſt be accounted of.

Where thou lodgeſt, I will lodge.

A good Companion, ſaith the *Latine* Proverb, is *pro viatico*, I may adde alſo, *pro diverſorio*: *Ruth*, ſo be it ſhe may enjoy *Naomies* gracious companie, will be content with any Lodging, though happily it may be no better then *Iacob* had, *Gen.*28. And yet we ſee how ſome have been diſcouraged even from the company of our Saviour, for feare of hard lodging; witneſſe the Scribe, to whom when our Saviour ſaid, *The Foxes have their holes, and the Fowles of the ayre have neſts, but the ſonne of man hath not where to lay his head:* This cold comfort preſently quencht his forward zeale, and he never appeared afterward; whereas he ought to have ſaid to our Saviour as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Where thou lodgeſt will I lodge.*

Thy people ſhall be my people.

Haman being offended with *Mordecai*, as if it had been but leane and weak revenge to ſpit his ſpight upon one perſon, hated all the *Iewes* for *Mordecai's* ſake; the mad Beare ſtung with one Bee, would needs

throw

throw downe the whole Hive. But cleane contrarie, *Naomi* had ſo graciouſly demeaned her ſelfe, that *Ruth* for her ſake is fallen in love with all the *Iewes*. Farewell *Melchom*, farewell *Chemoſh*, farewell *Moab*; welcome *Iſrael*, welcome *Canaan*, welcome *Bethlehem*: all of a ſudden ſhe will turne Convert, ſhe will turne *Proſelyte*.

Obſervation.

The godly carriage of one particular perſon may beget a love of that Countrey and People whereof he is, even in a ſtranger and forreiner. Doe we then deſire to gaine credit to our Countrey, prayſe to our People, honour to our Nation, repute to our Religion? Let us deport and behave our ſelves graciouſly, if we live amongſt ſtrangers. On the other ſide, the baſe and debauched manners of ſome one man is able to make his Countrey ſtink in the noſtrils of thoſe forreiners amongſt whom he lives: *Ex uno diſcite omnes*; in one faithleſſe *Sinon* one may reade the Trecherie of all the *Grecians*.

Thy God ſhall be my God.

Jehoſaphat when he joyned with *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* 22. ſaid unto him, *My people is as thy people, and my horſes are as thy horſes*; that is, he would comply with him in a Politike League: but *Ruth* goes further to an unitie in Religion, *Thy God ſhall be my God.* Yea, but one may ſay, How came *Ruth* to know who was the God of *Naomi*? I anſwer: As God ſaid of *Abraham*, *I know that* Abraham *will inſtruct his children*; ſo may one confidently ſay of *Naomi*: I know that *Naomi* had catechiſed and inſtructed her daughter in law, and often taught her, that the God of the *Iſraelites* was the onely true God, who made Heaven and Earth, and that all others were but Idols, the workes of mens hands: Yet as the *Samaritans* beleeved our Saviour firſt upon the relation of the woman that came from the Well, *John* 4. 42. but afterwards ſaid unto her, *Now we believe, not becauſe of thy ſaying; for we have heard him our ſelves, and know that this is indeed the Chriſt, the Savieur of the world.* So happily *Ruth* was induced firſt

to

to the liking of the God of *Iſrael*, upon the credit of *Naomies* words; but afterwards her love of him proceeded from a more certaine ground, the motions o Gods holy Spirit in her heart.

Where thou dieſt will I die.

Here *Ruth* ſuppoſeth two things: firſt, that ſhe and her mother in law ſhould both die; *It is appointed for all once to die:* ſecondly, that *Naomi*, as the eldeſt, ſhould die firſt; for according to the ordinarie cuſtome of Nature, it is moſt probable and likely, that thoſe that are moſt ſtricken in yeares ſhould firſt depart this Life: Yet I know not whether the Rule or the Exceptions be more generall, and therefore let both young and old prepare for death; the firſt may die ſoone, but the ſecond cannot live long.

And there will I be buried.

Where ſhe ſuppoſeth two things more: Firſt, that thoſe that ſurvived her, would doe her the favour to burie her; which is a common courteſie, not to be denyed to any: It was an Epitaph written upon the

Grave of a Beggar, *Nudus eram vivus, mortuus ecce tegor.* Secondly, ſhe ſuppoſeth that they would burie her, according to her inſtructions, neere to her mother *Naomi.*

Obſervation.

As it is good to enjoy the companie of the godly while they are living, ſo it is not amiſſe, if it will ſtand with conveniencie, to be buried with them after death. The old Prophets bones eſcapt a burning, by being buried with the other Prophets; and the man who was tumbled into the Grave of *Eliſha*, was revived by the vertue of his bones. And we reade in the *Acts* and *Monuments*, that the body of *Peter Martyr's* Wife was buried in a Dunghill; but afterward being taken up in the Reigne of Queene *Elizabeth*, it was honourably buried in *Oxford*, in the Grave of one *Frideſwick*, a *Popiſh* ſhee-Saint; to this end, that if *Poperie*, which God forbid, ſhould over-ſpread our Kingdome againe, and if the *Papiſts* ſhould goe about to untombe *Peter Martyr's* Wives bones, they ſhould be puzzled to diſtinguiſh betwixt this womans body and the Reliques

of

of their Saint. So, good it is ſometimes to be buried with thoſe who ſome doe account pious, though perchance in very deed they be not ſo.

The Lord doe ſo to me, and more alſo.

To aſcertaine *Naomi* of the ſeriouſneſſe of her intentions herein, *Ruth* backs what formerly ſhe had ſaid with an Oath, lined with an execration.

Obſervation.

Whence we may gather, it is lawfull for us to ſweare upon a juſt cauſe: but then theſe three Rules muſt be warily obſerved.

Firſt, that we know that the thing whereto we ſweare be true, if the Oath be aſſertorie; and if it be promiſſorie, that we be ſure that it is in our intent, and in our power, God bleſſing us, to performe that which we promiſe.

Secondly, that the occaſion whereupon we uſe it, be of moment and conſequence, not trifling and trivial.

Thirdly, that we ſweare by God alone, and not by any Creature. Sweare then neither

neither by the Heaven, nor by the Earth, nor by *Jeruſalem*, nor by the Temple, nor by the Gold of the Temple, nor by the Altar, nor by the Sacrifice on the Altar, but by God alone; for he onely is able to reward thee, if that thou affirmeſt be true; he onely is able to puniſh thee, if that thou avoucheſt be falſe. Yet this doth no wayes favour the practice of many now adayes, who make Oathes their language. Our Saviour ſaid to the *Jewes*; *Many good workes have I ſhewed you from the Father; for which of them goe you about to ſtone me?* So may the Lord ſay to many riotous Gallants now adayes; Many good deeds have I done to thee, I created thee of nothing, I ſent my Sonne to die for thee, by my providence I continually protect and preſerve thee; for which of theſe deeds doeſt thou goe about by Oathes to blaſpheme me?

Now whereas *Ruth* doth not ſay, *God damne me, God confound me, I would I might never ſtirre*; but ſhrowds the execration under generall termes, *God doe ſo to me, and more alſo:* we learne, it is not good to particularize in any kinde of puniſh-

puniſhment when we ſweare, but onely to expreſſe the Curſe in generall termes, leaving it to the diſcretion of God Almightie, to chuſe that Arrow out of his Quiver which he ſhall thinke moſt fit to ſhoot at us.

If ought but death.

See here the large extent of a Saints love, it laſts till death; and no wonder; for it is not founded upon Honour, Beautie, or Wealth, or any other ſiniſter reſpect in the partie beloved, which is ſubject to Age, or Mutabilitie, but onely on the Grace and Pietie in him; which foundation becauſe it alwayes laſteth, that Love which is built upon it, is alſo perpetuall.

Part thee and me.

Death is that which parteth one friend from another: Then the deare Father muſt part with his dutifull Child, then the dutifull Child muſt forgoe his deare Father; then the kinde Husband muſt leave his conſtant Wife, then the conſtant Wife muſt loſe her kinde Husband; then the carefull Maſter muſt be ſundred from his induſtrious Servant, then the induſtrious

Servant

ſervant muſt be ſevered from his carefull Maſter. Yet this may be ſome comfort to thoſe whoſe friends Death hath taken away, that as our Saviour ſaid to the Diſciples, *Yet a little while and you ſhall not ſee me, and yet a little while and you ſhall ſee me againe:* ſo yet a little while, and we ſhall not ſee our friends; and yet a little while, and we ſhall ſee them againe in the Kingdome of Heaven; for, *non mittuntur, ſed præmittuntur*, we doe not forgoe them, but they goe before us.

To conclude: we ſee many women ſo ſtrangely diſguiſed with phantaſtick faſhions, as if they deſired to verifie the nickname of the Philoſopher, and to prove themſelves in very deed to be very Monſters; yea, many of them ſo affect Man-like Clothes and ſhorne Haire, it is hard to diſcover the Sex of a Woman through the Attire of a Man. But we ſee in my Text, worthy *Ruth* taking upon her, not the Clothes, but the Courage; not the Haire, but the Heart; not the Attire, but the Reſolution of a Man, yea, and more then of a Man, witneſſe her worthy ſpeech, *Intreat me not to depart &c.*

Verſ.

Verſ. 18.

And when ſhe ſaw that ſhe was ſtedfaſtly minded to goe with her, ſhe left off ſpeaking unto her.

Orpah and *Ruth* may be compared to two ſtrong Forts, *Naomi* to one that beſieged them, who made three ſore Aſſaults upon them: The firſt, in the eighth Verſe; which Aſſault both of them reſiſted with equall conſtancie: The ſecond, in the eleventh Verſe; to which *Orpah* baſely yeeldeth, and accepteth termes of Compoſition: The laſt, in the fifteenth Verſe; which *Ruth* moſt valiantly defeated, and ſtood upon termes of Defiance to the mention of any returne. Now as ſouldiers when they have long beſieged a Citie with the loſſe of Time, Money, and Men, being hopeleſſe to take it, they even ſound a Retreat, and retire home, without accompliſhing their deſire: ſo *Naomi* perceiving that all her arguments which ſhe uſed to conquer *Ruth*, like Water in the Smiths Forge caſt on Coales, did more intend the heat

heat of her conſtancie, gives over in my Text, *And when ſhe ſaw &c.*

Which words doe probably perſwade what formerly we affirmed, namely, that *Naomi* diſſwaded her daughter, onely to ſearch and ſound her ſinceritie, not with any true deſire ſhe ſhould goe back to *Moab*. For even as it is plaine, that the Replyer in his Diſputation aimeth not at the ſuppreſſing, but at the advancing of a Truth, who ſurceaſeth and cavills no longer, when he ſees the neck of his argument broken with a ſufficient anſwer; ſo it appeareth that *Naomi*, what ſhe had ſaid formerly, ſpake it onely to trie her daughter, becauſe having now had ſufficient experience of her conſtancie, ſhe ſo willingly deſiſted. God wreſtled with *Jacob*, with a deſire to be conquer'd; ſo *Naomi* no doubt oppoſed *Ruth*, hoping and wiſhing that ſhe her ſelfe might be foiled.

And when ſhe ſaw that ſhe was ſtedfaſtly minded.

The *Hebrew* reades it, *that ſhe ſtrengthned her ſelfe*; that being their phraſe to expreſſe an Oath.

Ob-

Obſervation.

Where we obſerve, Oaths taken upon juſt occaſion, are excellent Ties and Bands to ſtrengthen men in the performance of thoſe things to which they ſweare. The greater pitie it is then, that a thing in it ſelfe ſo ſoveraigne, ſhould be ſo dayly and dangerouſly abuſed. Witneſſe *Herod*, who by reaſon of a raſh Oath, caſt himſelfe into a worſe Priſon then that wherein he had put the *Baptiſt*, making that (which being well uſed might have confirmed in Pietie) to be a meanes to inforce him to Murther.

Vſe.

Let this teach us, when we finde our ſelves to lagge and faulter in Chriſtianitie, to call to minde that ſolemne Vow, Promiſe, and Profeſſion, which our Godfathers in our Name made for us at our Baptiſme, *To forſake the Devill and all his workes, the vaine pompes and vanities of this wicked world, and to fight valiantly under Chriſts Standard.* Let us remember from whence we are fallen, and doe our firſt worke. We need not make a new

Vow,

Vow, but only renew the old, and so settle and establish our selves in the practice of Pietie, as *Ruth* in my Text by an Oath strengthned her selfe.

She left off speaking unto her.

She saw she had now enough expressed and declared her integritie, and therefore she would not put her to the trouble of any farther tryall.

Observation.

Hence the Doctrine is this: After proofe and tryall made of their fidelitie, we are to trust our Brethren, without any farther suspition. Not to trie before we trust, is want of wisdome; not to trust after we have tryed, is want of charitie. The Goldsmith must purifie the drosse and oare from the Gold, but he must be warie lest he makes waste of good Metall, if overcurious in too often refining. We may search and sound the sinceritie of our Brethren, but after good experience made of their uprightnesse, we must take heed lest by continuall sifting and proving them, we offend a weak Christian. Christ tryed the woman

woman of *Syrophœnicia* firſt with ſilence, then with two ſharpe anſwers; at laſt finding her to be ſound, he diſmiſſed her with granting her requeſt, and commending of her faith. When he had ſaid to *Peter* the third time, *Loveſt thou me?* he reſted ſatisfied with *Peters* anſwer, and troubled him with no more queſtions.

Uſe.

It may confute the jealous and ſuſpitious mindes of ſuch who ſtill thinke that their Brethren are rotten at the heart, hypocritical, diſſemblers, though they have made never ſo manifeſt proofe of their uprightneſſe. *Thomas* would not take his Maſters Reſurrection on the Credit of his fellow-Apoſtles relation; his faith would not follow, except his owne ſenſe was the Uſher to lead it the way: ſo theſe men are altogether incredulous, and very Infidels in the point of their Brethrens ſinceritie, though it be never ſo ſurely warranted unto them on the words of thoſe whom they ought to beleeve. Hence oftentimes it comes to paſſe, that they ſcandalize and offend many weake Chriſtians,

whose Graces are true, though weake; Faith unfained, though feeble: Yea, it maketh weake Saints to be jealous of themselves, to see others so jealous of them. But we must be wonderfull carefull how we give offence to any of Gods *little ones*. When *Esau*, *Gen.*33.13. would have perswaded *Jacob* to drive on faster, *Jacob* excused himselfe, saying, *That the children were tender, and the Ewes big with young, and if they should be overdriven one day, they would die.* Thus if any would perswade us to sift and winnow, and trie the integritie of our Brethren, after long experience of them, we may answer, This is dangerous to be done, because *smoaking Flax* and *bruised Reeds*, tender Professors, may utterly be discouraged and dis-heartened by our restlesse pressing and disquieting of them. Wherefore *Naomi* having now seene the Realitie of *Ruths* Resolutions, left off from any further molesting of her.

Vers.

Verſ. 19,20,21,22.

So they went both untill they came to Bethlehem, *and when they came to* Bethlehem, *all the Citie was moved at them, and they ſaid, Is not this* Naomi?

And ſhe ſaid, Call me not Naomi, *but call me* Marah, *for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me.*

I went out full, and the Lord hath cauſed me to returne emptie; why call you me Naomi, *ſithence the Lord hath teſtified againſt me, and the Almightie hath afflicted me?*

So Naomi *returned, and* Ruth *the* Moabiteſſe; *her Daughter in law with her, when ſhe came out of the Countrey of* Moab; *and they came to* Bethlehem *in*

the beginning of Barley Harveſt.

THe holy Spirit mentioneth not what diſcourſe they exchanged by the way; yet no doubt they were neither ſilent, nor buſied in unprofitable talke.

And all the Citie was moved, &c.

See here, *Naomi* was formerly a woman of good qualitie and faſhion, of good ranke and repute; otherwiſe her returne in povertie had not been ſo generally taken notice of. Shrubs may be grubb'd to the ground, and none miſſe them, but every one markes the felling of a Cedar. Groveling Cottages may be evened to the Earth, and none obſerve them; but every Traveller takes notice of the fall of a Steeple. Let this comfort thoſe to whom God hath given ſmall Poſſeſſions. Should he viſit them with povertie, and take from them that little they have, yet their griefe and ſhame would be the leſſe: they ſhould not have ſo many fingers pointed at them, ſo many eyes ſtaring on them,

them, ſo many words ſpoken of them; they might lurke in obſcuritie; it muſt be a *Naomi*, a perſon of eminency and eſtate, whoſe povertie muſt move a whole Citie.

And they ſaid, Is not this Naomi?

Remarkable it is, that ſo many people ſhould jump in the ſame expreſſion; but as *Abraham* laughed, and *Sarah* laughed, both uſed the ſame outward geſture, yet ariſing from different cauſes; his laughter from joy, her's from diſtruſt: ſo all theſe people might meet in the ſame forme of words, yet farre diſſent in their minds wherewith they ſpake them. Some might ſpeak out of admiration, *ſtrange, wonderfull! is this ſhe who once was ſo wealthie? how quickly is a River of Riches drained drie? ſhe that formerly was ſo faire, now one can ſcarce read the ruines of beauty in her face: Is not this* Naomi? Some out of exprobation; *See, ſee, this is ſhe that could not be content to tarry at home to take part of the Famine with the reſt of her fellows, but needs with her Husband and Sons, muſt be gadding to* Moab: *ſee what good*

ſhe hath got by removing, by changing her Country, ſhe hath changed her Condition: Is not this Naomi? Some might ſpeak it out of Commiſeration: *Alas, alas, Is not this that gracious woman, that godly Saint, which formerly by her Charity relieved many in diſtreſſe? how ſoon is a full clod turned into parched earth? one that ſupplied others, into one that needeth to be ſupplied by others:* Is not this *Naomi*?

And ſhe ſaid, call me not Naomi, *but call me* Marah.

Naomi, ſignifieth *Beautifull*; Marah, *Bitter*, Exod. 15. 23. where we ſee, that the Godly in povertie are unwilling to have Names and Titles, diſagreeing and diſproportioned to their preſent eſtates, which may confute the folly of many, which being in diſtreſs, and living little better then upon the alms of others, will ſtill ſtand upon their points, bear themſelves bravely on their birth, not loſe an inch of their place, not abate an ace of their gentrie; far otherwiſe was *Naomi* affected, being poor, ſhe would not be overnamed, or Title-heavie: *Call me not* Naomi, *but call me* Marah.

Ob.

Obſerv.

Here alſo we may ſee, that it was a cuſtome of great Antiquitie in the World, that Men and Women ſhould have ſeverall names whereby they were called, and that for theſe three Reaſons.

1. That they might be differenced and diſtinguiſhed from others.

2. That they might be ſtirred up to verifie the meanings and ſignifications of their names; wherefore let every *Obadiah* ſtrive to be a ſervant of God, each *Nathaniel* to be a gift of God, *Oneſimus* to be profitable, every *Roger* quiet and peaceable, *Robert* famous for counſell, and *William* a help and defence to many; not like *Abſalon*, who was not a Father of Peace, as his name doth import, but a ſonne of Sedition; and *Diotrephes*, not nurſed by God, as his name ſounds, but puffed up by the Devill, as it is 3 *John* 9.

3. That they might be incited to imitate the vertues of thoſe worthy perſons, who formerly have been bearers and owners of their names. Let all *Abrahams* be faithfull, *Iſaac's* quiet, *Jacobs* painfull, *Joſephs*

Ioſephs chaſte, every *Lewis* pious, *Edward* confeſſor of the true faith, *William* conqueror over his owncorruptions. Let them alſo carefully avoid thoſe ſinnes for which the bearers of the Names ſtand branded to poſteritie. Let every *Jonah* beware of frowardneſſe, *Thomas* of diſtruſtfulneſſe, *Martha* of worldlineſs, *Mary* of wantonneſſe. If there be two of our names, one exceedingly good, the other notoriouſly evill, let us decline the vices of the one, and practiſe the vertues of the other. Let every *Judas* not follow *Judas Iſcariot*, who betrayed our Saviour, but *Judas* the brother of *Iames*, the writer of the generall Epiſtle; each *Demetrius*, not follow him in the acts who made ſilver ſhrines for *Diana*, but *Demetrius* 3 *Iohn*, who had a good report of all men. Every *Ignatius* not imitate *Ignatius Loiola* the lame Father of blind obedience, but *Ignatius* the worty Martyr in the *Primitve Church*. And if it ſhould chance through the indiſcretion of Parents and God-fathers, that a bad name ſhould be impoſed on any; oh let not folly be with them, becauſe *Nabal* is their name; but in ſuch a caſe, let them

ſtrive

ſtrive to falſifie, diſprove, and confute their names; otherwiſe if they be good, they muſt anſwer them.

In the dayes of Q. *Elizabeth*, there was a Royall Ship called the *Revenge*, which having maintained a long fight againſt a Fleet of *Spaniards*, (wherein eight hundred great Shot were diſcharged againſt her) was at laſt faine to yeeld: but no ſooner were her men gone out of her, and two hundred freſh *Spaniards* come into her, but ſhe ſuddenly ſunke them and her ſelfe; and ſo the *Revenge* was revenged. Shall liveleſſe pieces of Wood anſwer the Names which men impoſe upon them, and ſhall not reaſonable ſoules doe the ſame? But of all Names, I pray God that never juſt occaſion be given, that we be Chriſtened *Iccabod*, but that the glory may remaine in our *Iſrael* ſo long as the faithfull Witneſſe endureth in Heaven. And ſo much of thoſe words, *Call me not* Naomi, *but &c.*

For the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me.

Afflictions relliſh ſoure and bitter even to the pallats of the beſt Saints.

Ob-

Obſervation.

Now bitter things are obſerved in Phyſick to have a double operation: firſt, to ſtrengthen and corroborate the Liver; and ſecondly, to cleanſe and wipe away Choler, which cloggeth the ſtomack: both theſe effects afflictions by their bitterneſſe produce; they ſtrengthen the inward Vitals of a Chriſtian, his Faith and Patience, and cleanſe Gods Saints from thoſe ſuperfluous excrements which the ſurfeit of Proſperitie hath cauſed in them. It may therefore ſerve to comfort ſuch as groane under Gods afflicting hand, *Hebrews* 12. 11. The Book which S. *Iohn* eat, *Rev.* 10. 10. was *ſweet* in his mouth, but *bitter* in his belly: cleane contrarie, afflictions are bitter in the mouth, but ſweet in the belly; God by ſanctifying them, extracting Honey out of Gall, and Sugar out of Wormewood. And let it teach us alſo, not to wonder if the Children of God winch and ſhrug, and make ſoure faces, when afflicted: Wonder not at *David*, if he *cryeth out* in the *anguiſh of his heart*; at *Iob*, if he *complaineth* in the *bitterneſſe*

of

of his ſoule; at *Ieremiah*, if he *lamenteth* in the *extremitie of his griefe*: For even then they are ſwallowing of a Potion, which is bitter unto fleſh and blood.

I went out full, and the Lord hath cauſed me to returne emptie.

Here may we ſee the uncertaintie of all outward wealth.

Obſervation.

How quickly may a *Craſſus*, or *Cræſus*, be turned into a *Codrus*; the richeſt, into the pooreſt of men! Whom the Sunne-riſing ſeeth in wealth, him the Sunne-ſetting may ſee in want. Set not up then your hornes ſo high, neither ſpeake preſumptuous words, ye wealthie men; for God, if it pleaſeth him, can in a moment diſpoſſeſſe you of all your Riches. And let us all *not lay up Treaſures here on Earth, where Ruſt and Mothes doe corrupt, and Theeves breake through and ſteale; but lay up your Treaſure in Heaven, where Ruſt and Moth doe not corrupt, and Theeves doe not breake through and ſteale.*

Why

Why call you me Naomi, *ſithence the Lord &c.*

The mention of their former Wealth is grievous to the godly, when they are in preſent Povertie.

Obſervation.

When the Children of *Iſrael* are Captives in *Babylon*, it cuts them to the heart to be twitted with the Songs of *Sion*. And it may teach this point of wiſdome to ſuch as repaire to give comfort to men in affliction, not to mention that tedious and ingratefull ſubject, what happineſſe that partie formerly enjoyed. Summe not up to *Job* in diſtreſſe, the number of his Camels, tell not his Sheepe, reckon not his Oxen, reade not unto him an Inventorie of thoſe Goods whereof he before was poſſeſſed, for this will but adde to his vexation; rather deſcend, to apply ſolid and ſubſtantial comfort unto him.

Sithence

Sithence the Lord hath teſtified againſt me, and the Almightie hath afflicted me?

Every affliction is a witneſſe that God is angry with us for our ſinnes.

Obſervation.

Who then is able to hold out Suit with God in the Court of Heaven? For God himſelfe is both Judge and Witneſſe, and alſo the executor and inflicter of puniſhments. It is therefore impoſſible for ſinfull man to plead with him; and it is our moſt adviſed courſe, as ſoone as may be, to come to termes of compoſition with him, and to make meanes unto him through the mediation of our Saviour. Now that all afflictions are immediately inflicted by God, we have ſhewed formerly.

And they came to Bethlehem *in the beginning of Early Harveſt.*

The *Iewes* had two diſtinct Harveſts of Wheat

Wheat and Barly, and Barly was the firſt, 2 *Sam.* 21. 9. So here we ſee the providence of God, in ordering and diſpoſing the Journey of *Naomi*, to end it in the moſt convenient time. Had ſhe come before Harveſt, ſhe would have been ſtraitned for meanes to maintaine her ſelfe; if after Harveſt, *Ruth* had loſt all thoſe occaſions which paved the way to her future advancement. God therefore, who ordered her going, concludes her Journey in the beginning of Harveſt.

And thus have we gone over this Chapter. Now as *Samuel* in the firſt Booke, *chap.* 7. *verſ.* 12. erected an Altar, and called it *Eben-ezer*, for, ſaid he, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us:* ſo here may I rayſe an Altar of Gratitude unto God, with the ſame inſcription, *Eben-ezer*, *Hitherto the Lord of his goodneſſe hath aſſiſted us.*

CHAP.

Chap. II.

Verſ. 1. 2.

And Naomi *had a kinſman of her Husbands, a mighty man of wealth, of the Family of* Elimelech, *and his name was* Boaz.

And Ruth *the* Moabiteſſe *ſaid unto* Naomi, *I pray thee let me go into the field, and gather ears of Corne after him, in whoſe ſight I find favour: and ſhe ſaid unto her, goe my Daughter.*

THis firſt Verſe preſents us with two remarkable things.

1. Poore *Naomi* was allied to powerful *Boaz*.

2. *Boaz* was both a powerful man, and a Godly man.

Of the firſt. Poore people may be allied

lied and of great kindred to thoſe that are wealthy; and thoſe that be wealthy, to ſuuh as are poor. *Ioſeph*, though Governour of *Egypt*, had poor *Iacob* to his Father, and plain ſhepheards to his brethren. *Eſther*, though Queene to *Ahaſhuerus*, hath poore *Mordecai* for her Uncle.

Vſe 1.

Let this confute ſuch as having gotten a little more thick clay then the reſt of their Family, the getting of new wealth and honour makes them to loſe their old eyes, ſo that they cannot ſee and diſcern their poor kindred afterwards. When *Ioſeph* was Governour of *Egypt*, it is ſaid, that he knew his brethren, but his brethren knew not him; bnt now adayes it happeneth cleane contrary. If one of a Family be advanced to great honour, it is likely that his kindred will know him, but he oftentimes comes to forget them. Few there be of the noble nature of the Lord *Cromwel*, who ſitting at Dinner with the Lords of the Council, and chancing to ſee a poor man afar off which uſed to

ſweep

ſweep the Cells and the Cloiſters, called for the man, and told the Lords; This mans Father hath given me many a good meale, and he ſhall not lack ſo long as I live. [*Fox* Page 1188.]

Uſe 2.

Let it teach thoſe who are the top of their kindred, the beſt of their Houſe, to be thankful to Gods gracious goodneſſe who hath raiſed them to ſuch a height. He hath not dealt thus with every one, neither are all of their kindred ſo well provided for outward maintenance. And alſo let them learn to be bountiful and beneficial to their kindred in diſtreſs. *Mordecai* ſaid to *Eſther*, Eſth. 4. 14. *Who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdome for ſuch a time?* namely to deliver her Country-men the Jews from that imminent danger.

So who knoweth whether God hath raiſed thee up, who art the beſt of thy kindred, to this very intent, that thou mighteſt be the Treaſure and the Store-houſe to ſupplie the want of others which

are allied unto thee? But if one ſhould chance to be of ſo wealthy a ſtock, as that none of his alliance ſtood in need of his charity; let ſuch a one caſt his eye upon ſuch as are of kindred unto him by his ſecond birth, and ſo he ſhall find enough Widows, Orphans, and poor Chriſtians, to receive his liberalitie.

Notwithſtanding, let poor people be warie and diſcreet, that through their idleneſſe they be not a burthen to wealthie men of their alliance. When a Husband-man claimed kindred in *Groſted Biſhop* of *Lincoln*, and would fain on the inſtant turn a Gentleman, and to this end requeſted his Lordſhip to beſtow an Office upon him: the *Biſhop* told him, that if his *Plough* were broken, he would mend it; if he wanted a *Plough*, he would make him a new one; telling him withall, that he ſhould by no means leave that Calling and Vocation wherein God had ſet him. So ought all poor people induſtriouſly to take pains for themſelves, and not to give themſelves over to eaſe, relying and depending for their maintenance on their reference and relation to a rich kinſman.

Come

Come we now to the ſecond Obſervation, That the ſame man may be godly, and alſo mighty in wealth like *Boaz*. Behold your Calling; not many wiſe, yet ſome wiſe, as *Salomon*, and *Sergius* Deputie of *Cyprus*; not many rich, yet ſome rich, as *Abraham*, *Iob*; not many noble, yet ſome noble, as *Theophilus*. For It is not the having of wealth, but the having confidence in wealth; not the poſſeſſing it, but the relying on it, which makes rich men incapable of the Kingdome of *Heaven*: otherwiſe Wealth well uſed is a great bleſſing, enabling the owner to do God more glorie, the Church and Common-Wealth more good.

Uſe.

Let all Wealthie men ſtrive to add inward grace unto their outward greatneſs. Oh 'tis excellent when *Ioaſh* and *Iehoiada* meet together; when *Prince* and *Prieſt*, *Power* and *Pietie* are united in the ſame perſon; that ſo Greatneſſe may be ſeaſoned and ſanctified by Grace, and Grace credited and countenanced by Greatneſſe;

that ſo *Kings* may be *Nurſing-Fathers*, and *Queenes Nurſing-Mothers* to Gods Church. Contrarie to which, how many be there, that thinke themſelves priviledged from being good, becauſe they are great? Confining Pietie to Hoſpitals; for their owne parts they diſdaine ſo baſe a Companion. Hence as Hills, the higher, the barrenner; ſo men commonly, the wealthier, the worſe; the more Honour, the leſſe Holineſſe. And as Rivers, when content with a ſmall Channell, runne ſweet and cleare; when ſwelling to a Navigable Channell, by the confluence of ſeverall Tributarie Rivulets, gather mudde and mire, and grow ſalt and brackiſh, and violently beare downe all before them; ſo many men, who in meane Eſtates have been Pious and Religious, being advanced in Honour, and inlarged in Wealth, have growne both empious and prophane towards God, cruell and tyrannicall over their Brethren.

And Ruth *the* Moabiteſſe *ſaid unto* Naomi, *I pray thee let me goe into the field, and gather eares of Corne &c.*

Herein two excellent Graces appeare in *Ruth.*

Firſt, Obedience; ſhe would not goe to gleane, without the leave of her Mother in law. Verily I ſay unto you, I have not found ſo much dutie, no, not in naturall Daughters to their owne Mothers. How many of them now-adayes, in matters of more moment, will betroth and contract themſelves, not onely without the knowledge and conſent, but even againſt the expreſſe Commands of their Parents?

Secondly, ſee her Induſtrie, that ſhe would condeſcend to gleane. Though I thinke not, with the *Iewiſh Rabbins*, that *Ruth* was the Daughter to *Eglon*, King of *Moab*; yet no doubt ſhe was deſcended of good Parentage, and now ſee, faine to gleane. Whence we may gather, that thoſe that formerly have had good birth,

that ſo *Kings* may be *Nurſing-Fathers*, and *Queenes Nurſing-Mothers* to Gods Church. Contrarie to which, how many be there, that thinke themſelves priviledged from being good, becauſe they are great? Confining Pietie to Hoſpitals; for their owne parts they diſdaine ſo baſe a Companion. Hence as Hills, the higher, the barrenner; ſo men commonly, the wealthier, the worſe; the more Honour, the leſſe Holineſſe. And as Rivers, when content with a ſmall Channell, runne ſweet and cleare; when ſwelling to a Navigable Channell, by the confluence of ſeverall Tributarie Rivulets, gather mudde and mire, and grow ſalt and brackiſh, and violently beare downe all before them; ſo many men, who in meane Eſtates have been Pious and Religious, being advanced in Honour, and inlarged in Wealth, have growne both empious and prophane towards God, cruell and tyrannicall over their Brethren.

And

And Ruth *the* Moabiteſſe *ſaid unto* Naomi, *I pray thee let me goe into the field, and gather eares of Corne &c.*

Herein two excellent Graces appeare in *Ruth.*

Firſt, Obedience; ſhe would not goe to gleane, without the leave of her Mother in law. Verily I ſay unto you, I have not found ſo much dutie, no, not in naturall Daughters to their owne Mothers. How many of them now-adayes, in matters of more moment, will betroth and contract themſelves, not onely without the knowledge and conſent, but even againſt the expreſſe Commands of their Parents?

Secondly, ſee her Induſtrie, that ſhe would condeſcend to gleane. Though I thinke not, with the *Iewiſh Rabbins*, that *Ruth* was the Daughter to *Eglon*, King of *Moab*; yet no doubt ſhe was deſcended of good Parentage, and now ſee, faine to gleane. Whence we may gather, that thoſe that formerly have had good birth,

and breeding, may afterward be forced to make hard ſhifts to maintaine themſelves. *Muſculus* was forced to worke with a Weaver, and afterwards was faine to delve in the Ditch, about the Citie of *Strasburgh*; as *Pantalion* in his Life. Let this teach even thoſe whoſe veines are waſhed with generous bloud, and arteries quickned with Noble ſpirits, in their proſperitie to furniſh, qualifie, and accommodate themſelves with ſuch Gentile Arts, and liberall Myſteries, as will be neither blemiſh nor burthen to their birth, that ſo if hereafter God ſhall caſt them into povertie, theſe Arts may ſtand them in ſome ſtead, towards their maintenance and reliefe.

And Naomi *ſaid, Goe my Daughter.*

See here how meekely and mildly ſhe anſwers her: The diſcourſe of Gods Children, in their ordinarie talke, ought to be kinde and courteous: So betwixt *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, *Gen.* 22. 7. betwixt *Elkanah* and *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 23. Indeed it is lawfull and neceſſarie for *Jacob* to chide

chide *Rachel* ſpeaking unadviſedly, *Gen.* 30. 2. for *Job* to ſay to his Wife, *Thou ſpeakeſt like a fooliſh Wife.* But otherwiſe, when no juſt occaſion of anger is given, their words ought to be meeke and kinde like *Neomies*, *Goe my Daughter.*

Verſ. 3, 4.

And ſhe went, and came and gleaned in the field after the Reapers, and it happened that ſhe met with the portion of the field of Boaz, *who was of the family of* Elimelech.

And behold, Boaz *came from* Bethlehem, *and ſaid unto the Reapers, The Lord be with you; and they anſwered him, The Lord bleſſe thee.*

FOrmerly we have ſeene the dutifulneſſe of *Ruth*, which would not leave her Mother untill ſhe had leave from her Mother: Proceed we now to her induſtrie, and Gods providence over her. As

the *Starre*, *Math.*2. guided the *Wiſe-men* to *Iudea*, to *Bethlehem*, to the *Inne*, to the *Stable*, to the *Manger*: ſo the rayes and beames of Gods Providence conducted *Ruth*, that of all Grounds within the compaſſe and confines, within the bounds and borders of *Bethlehem*, ſhe lighted on the field of *Boaz*.

And it happened.

Obiection.

How comes the holy Spirit to uſe this word; a prophane terme, which deſerves to be baniſht out of the mouthes of all Chriſtians? Are not all things ordered by Gods immediate Providence, without which a *Sparrow lighteth not on the ground*? Is not that ſentence moſt true, *God ſtretcheth from end to end ſtrongly, and diſpoſeth all things ſweetly? Strongly*, Lord, *for thee*; *ſweetly*, Lord, *for me*: ſo S. *Bernard*. Or was the Providence of God ſolely confined to his people of *Iſrael*, that ſo *Ruth* being a ſtranger of *Moab*, muſt be left to the adventure of hazard? How comes the holy Spirit to uſe this word, *Hap*?

Anſwer.

Anſwer.

Things are ſaid to happen, not in reſpect of God, but in reſpect of us; becauſe oftentimes they come to paſſe, not onely without our purpoſe and fore-caſt, but even againſt our intentions and determinations. It is lawfull therefore in a ſober ſenſe to uſe theſe expreſſions, *It chanced*, or, *It fortuned*, *Luke* 10. 30. Nor can any juſt exception be taken againſt thoſe words in the Collect, *Through all Changes and Chances of this mortall life:* Provided alwayes, that in our formes of ſpeech we dreame not of any Heathen Chance. It is obſerved, that τυχὴ is not uſed in all the Workes of *Homer*; but ſure S. *Auſtine* in the firſt of his *Retract.* complaineth, that he had too often uſed the word *Fortuna*; and therefore in the *Pagans* ſenſe thereof, we ought to abſtaine from it.

Obſervation.

Now whereas *Ruth* by chance lighteth on *Boaz* his field, we may obſerve; Admirable

rable is the providence of God, in the ordering of contingent events, to his glory and his Childrens good. The Scripture ſwarmeth with Preſidents in this behalfe, which at this time I ſurceaſe to recite, and conclude with the *Pſalmiſt*; *O Lord, how wonderfull are thy workes! in wiſdome haſt thou made them all, the Earth is full of thy Riches.* To which I may adde; *Oh that men would therefore prayſe the Name of the Lord, and ſhew forth the wonderfull workes that he doth for the children of men!*

And behold Boaz *came unto his Reapers.*

He had a man over them, yet himſelfe came to over-ſee them.

Obſervation.

Where note; it is the part of a thriving Husband, not to truſt the care of his affairs to his ſervants, but to over-ſee them himſelfe. *The Maſters eye maketh a fat Horſe:* and one asking, what was the beſt compoſt to Manure Land, it was anſwered,

ed, *the duſt of the Maſters feet*; meaning his preſence to behold his own buſineſs. *Huſhai* would not councell *Abſolon* to let *Achitophel* goe with his Armie, but adviſed him; *Thou ſhalt goe to battel in thine own perſon.* However he herein had a ſecret intent, yet thus farre the proportion holds: Things thrive beſt, not when they are committed to Surrogates, Deputies, Delegates, and Subſtitutes: but when men themſelves over-ſee them. Let Maſters therefore of Families, carefully attend on their own buſineſſe; and let the Daughters of *Sarah*, whom the meekneſſe of their Sex hath priviledged from following without doors affairs, imitate the wiſe woman, *Proverbs* 37. 15. 27. *She riſes whiles as yet it is night, and giveth her meat to her Houſhold, and their portions to her Maids: She looks well to all the wayes of her Houſhold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſſe.* And ſuch ſervants which have careleſſe Maſters, let them look better to their Maſters eſtate, then their Maſters do to their own: let them be neither idle nor unfaithfull in their place, knowing, *that though their earthly*

Maſter

Maſter be negligent to eye them, yet they have a Maſter in heaven who both beholds and will puniſh, or reward them according to their deſerts. And as for the Sons of the *Prophets*, let them feed the Flock over which they are placed, and not thinke to ſhuffle and ſhift off their care to their Curates and Readers in their own unneceſſary abſence; and yet how many are there, that Preach as ſeldome as *Apollo* laughs, once in the yeare: Indeed *Elias* faſted forty dayes and forty nights in the ſtrength of one meale; but ſurely theſe think that their people can hold out faſting a twelve-moneth. Well, let them practiſe *Boaz* example, as they have Curates, ſo had he one to care for his affairs; and yet behold in perſon, he comes forth unto his Reapers.

And ſaid unto them, The Lord be with you.

Obſerve, Curteous and loving ſalutations beſeeme Chriſtians: indeed our Saviour *Mat.* 10. forbade his Diſciples to ſalute any in the way, but his meaning was, that

that they ſhould not lag or delay, whereby to be hindred from the ſervice wherein they were imployed; and S. *John* in his ſecond Epiſtle, ſaith, *That to ſome we muſt not ſay God ſpeed, leſt we be made partakers of their evill deeds*; but that is meant of notorious ſinners, which have diſcovered their impious intents. It is commonly ſaid, that the *Small Pox* is not infectious untill it be broken out, ſo that before the time one may ſafely converſe, eat, drinke, lie with them; but after the Pox is broken out, it is very dangerous: So we may ſafely ſalute, and exchange diſcourſe with the moſt wicked ſinners, whiles yet they ſmoother and conceale their bad deſignes; but when once they declare and expreſſe them, then it is dangerous to have any further familiarity with them; for ſuch *Marcions*, the firſt born of the Devill, and the eldeſt Sonne of Satan, are ſalutations good enough.

Uſe.

Thoſe are juſtly to be reproved, which lately have changed all hearty expreſſions of

of love into verball Complements, which Elymologie is not to be deduced a *completione mentis*, but a *completè mentiri*. And yet I cannot say, that these men lie in their throat, for I perswade my selfe, their words never came so neare their heart, but meerly they lie in their mouths, where all their promises

Both birth and burial in a breath they have;
That mouth which is their womb, it is their grave.

Yea, those words which S. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, thought to be the most affectionate expression of love, is now made the word of course, commonly bandied betwixt superficial friends at the first encounter, YOUR SERVANT; worse then these are the ambitious Saluters, like *Absolon*, 2 Sam. 15. 4. who at the same time, by taking his Fathers Subjects by their hands, stole away their hearts; and the lower his bodie did couch, the higher his mind did aspire. Worst of all is the treacherous salutation of *Judas* and *Joab*, who at one instant pretend lip-love, and intend heart hatred; who both kisse and kill,

kill, embrace another with their hands, and imbrew their hands in his blood whom they embrace.

And they answered him, The Lord blesse thee.

When one offers us a curtesie, especially being our superiour, it is fitting we should requite him. It is a noble conquest for to be overcome with wrongs; but it is a signe of a degenerous nature, to be out-vied with courtesies; and therefore if one begin a kindnesse to us, let us (if it lie in our power) pledge him in the same nature.

Vers. 5,6,7.

And Boaz *said unto the servant which was appointed over the Reapers, Whose is this Maid?*

And the servant which was appointed over the Reapers, answered and said; This is the Moabitish *Maid,*

Maid, which came with Naomi *from the Countrey of* Moab,
Which came and ſaid, Let me gather I pray among the ſheaves after the Reapers; and ſo ſhe came and ſtayed here from morning untill now; onely ſhe tarried a little in the houſe.

And Boaz *ſaid unto the ſervant which was appointed over the Reapers.*

HEre we learne, that it is a part of good Husbandry in a numerous Family, to have one ſervant as Steward, to over-ſee the reſt. Thus *Abraham* had his *Eliezer* of *Damaſcus*, *Potiphar* his *Joſeph*, *Joſeph* his man which put the Cup into *Benjamin's* Sack; *Ahab* his *Obadiah*, *Hezekiah* his *Eliakim*, the ſonne of *Hilkiah*.

Obſervation.

Let Maſters therefore, in chuſing theſe Stewards to be ſet above the reſt, take ſuch

ſuch as are qualified like *Jethro's* deſcription of inferiour Judges, *Exod.*18. *men of courage, fearing God, dealing truly, hating covetouſneſſe.* And how-ever they priviledge them to be above the reſt of their ſervants, yet let them make them to know their dutie and their diſtance to their Maſters, leſt that come to paſſe which *Solomon* fore-telleth, *Prov.*29. *He that bringeth up his ſervant delicately in his youth, will make him like his ſonne at the laſt.* Let Stewards not be like that unjuſt one in the Goſpel, who made his Maſters Debtors write down fiftie meaſures of Wheat, and foureſcore meaſures of Oyle, when both ſeverally ſhould have been an hundred; but let them carefully diſcharge their Conſcience, in that Office wherein they are placed: whileſt inferiour ſervants, that are under their command, muſt neither grieve nor grudge to obey them, nor envie at their honour: But let this comfort thoſe underlings, that if they be wronged by theſe Stewards, their Appeale lyes open from them to their Maſter, who if good, will no doubt redreſſe their grievances.

Now if Stewards be neceſſarie in ordering of Families, ſurely men in authoritie are more neceſſarie, in governing the Church, and managing the Commonwealth. If a little Cock-Boat cannot be brought up a Tributarie Rivulet, without one to guide it; how ſhall a Caravan, a Gallioun, or Argoſie, ſayling in the vaſt Ocean, be brought into a Harbor, without a Pilot to conduct it? Let us therefore with all willingneſſe and humilitie ſubmit our ſelves to our Superiours, that ſo under them we may live a peaceable life, in all godlineſſe and honeſtie.

Whoſe is this Maid?

Boaz would know what thoſe perſons were that gleaned upon his Land; and good reaſon: for we ought not to proſtitute our liberalitie to all, though unknowne; but firſt we muſt examine who, and whence they be; otherwiſe, that which is given to worthleſſe perſons, is not given, but throwne away. I ſpeake not this to blunt the Charitie of any, who have often beſtowed their benevolence upon

upon Beggars unknowne and unſeene before; but if eaſily and with conveniencie (as *Boaz* could) they may attaine to know the qualities and conditions of ſuch perſons, before they diſpoſe their liberalitie unto them.

And the ſervant which was appointed.

He herein performed the part of a carefull ſervant, namely, fully to informe his Maſter. Servants ought ſo to inſtruct themſelves, as thereby to be able to give an account to their Lords, when they ſhall be called thereunto, and give them plenarie ſatisfaction and contentment in any thing belonging to their Office, wherein they ſhall be queſtioned. Now, whereas he doth not derogate or detract from *Ruth*, though a ſtranger, but ſets her forth with her due commendation; we gather, Servants when asked, ought to give the pure character of poore people to their Maſters, and no way to wrong or traduce them.

Which came and ſaid, Let me gather I pray.

See here *Ruths* honeſtie; ſhe would not preſume to gleane before ſhe had leave. Cleane contrarie is the practice of poore people now-adayes, which oft times take away things not onely without the knowledge, but even againſt the will of the owners. The Boy of the Prieſt, 1 *Sam.* 2. 16. when the Sacrifice was in offering, uſed to come with a *fleſh-hooke of three teeth*, and uſed to caſt it into the fat of the Sacrifice, making that his Fee, which ſo he fetcht out; if any gain-ſay'd him, he anſwered, *Thou ſhalt give it me now; or if thou wilt not, I will take it by force.* Thus poore people now-adayes, they caſt their hooke, their violent hands (gleaning the leane will not content them) into the fat, the beſt and principall of rich mens Eſtates, and breaking all Lawes of God and the King, they by maine force draw it unto themſelves. Not ſo *Ruth*; ſhe would not gleane without leave.

And

And ſtayed here from morning untill now.

See here her conſtancie in Induſtrie: Many are very diligent at the firſt ſetting forth, for a fit and a gird, for a ſnatch and away; but nothing violent, is long permanent: They are ſoone tyred, quickly wearie, and then turne from labour to lazineſſe. But *Ruth* continued in her labour *from the morning till now*; till Night, till the end of the Harveſt. O that we would imitate the conſtancie of *Ruth*, in the *working out of our ſalvation with feare and trembling!* Not onely to be induſtrious in the *Morning*, when we firſt enter into Chriſtianitie, but to hold out and to *perſevere even to the end of our lives.*

Onely ſhe tarried a little in the houſe.

No doubt ſome indiſpenſable buſineſſe detained her there; and probable it is, that a principall one was, to ſay her *Mattins*, to doe her Devotions, commend

her ſelfe with fervent prayer unto the Lord, to bleſſe her and her endeavours the day following. *A whet is no let*, ſaith the Proverb; Mowers loſe not any time, which they ſpend in whetting or grinding of their Sythes: our prayer to God in the Morning, before we enter on any buſineſſe, doth not hinder us in our dayes worke, but rather whets it, ſharpens it, ſets an edge on our dull ſoules, and makes our mindes to undertake our labours with the greater alacritie.

And here may I take juſt occaſion to ſpeake concerning *Gleaning*. Conſider firſt the antiquitie thereof, as being commanded by God, *Levit.* 19. 9. and 23. 22. Secondly, conſider the equitie thereof; it doth the Rich no whit of harme, it doth the Poore a great deale of good. One may ſay of it as *Lot* of *Zoar*; *Is it not a little one, and my ſoule ſhall live?* Is it not a pettie, a ſmall, exile courteſie, and the hearts of poore people ſhall be comforted thereby? *Reliquiæ Danaum, atque immitis Achillis*; the Remnant which hath eſcaped the edge of the Sythes, and avoided the hands of the Reapers. Had

our

our Reapers the Eyes of Eagles, and the Clawes of Harpeyes, they could not ſee and ſnatch each ſcattered Eare which may well be allowed for the Reliefe of the Poore. When our Saviour ſaid to the woman of *Syrophœnicia*, *It is not good to take the Childrens Bread, and caſt it to the Dogs:* She anſwered, *Yea, Lord, but the Dogs eat of the Childrens Crummes that fall from their Table.* So, if any Miſers mutter, *It is not meet that my Bread ſhould be caſt unto poore people, to gleane Corne upon my Lands*; yea, but let them know, that poore people (which are no *Dogs*, but ſetting a little thick Clay aſide, as good as themſelves) may eat the *falling Crummes*, the ſcattered Eares, which they gather on the ground.

Uſe.

It may confute the Covetouſneſſe of many, which repine that the Poore ſhould have any benefit by them; and are ſo farre from ſuffering the Poore to gleane, that even they themſelves gleane from the Poore, and ſpeake much like

to churliſh *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. *Shall I take my Wheat, my Rye, and my Barley, which I have prepared for my Family, and give it to the Poore, which I know not whence they be?* Yea, ſome have ſo hard hearts, that they would leave their Graine to be deſtroyed by Beaſts and Vermine, rather then that the Poore ſhould receive any benefit thereby. Cruell people, which preferre their Hogs before Chriſts Sheep, Mice before Men, Crowes before Chriſtians.

But withall, Pooré people muſt learne this Leſſon, to know the meaning of theſe two Pronounes, *Mine* and *Thine*; what belongs to their rich Maſters, and what pertaines to themſelves. The Sheep which had little ſpots, thoſe were *Jacobs* Fee; ſo the little ſpots, the looſe ſtraggling and ſcattered Eares, thoſe are the Poores: but as for the great ones, the handfulls, the arme-fulls, the Sheaves, the Shocks, the Cocks, theſe are none of theirs, but the rich Owners; and therefore let the Poore take heed how they put forth their hands to their neighbours goods.

Motive.

Motive.

One forcible Motive to perſwade the Rich to ſuffer the Poore to gleane, may be this: Even the greateſt, in reſpect of God, is but a gleaner. God, he is the Maſter of the Harveſt; all Gifts and Graces they are his, in an infinite meaſure; and every godly man, more or leſſe, gleanes from him. *Abraham* gleaned a great gleane of Faith; *Moſes*, of Meekneſſe; *Joſhuah*, of Valour; *Samſon*, of Strength; *Solomon*, of Wealth and Wiſdome; S. *Paul* of Knowledge, and the like. Now, if we would be glad at our hearts, that the Lord would give us free leave and libertie, for to gleane Graces out of his Harveſt, let us not grudge and repine, that poore people gleane a little gaine from our plentie. To conclude, when God hath multiplyed our *five Loaves*, that is, when of our little Seed he hath given us a great deale of increaſe, let poore people, like *Ruth* in the Text, be the *twelve Baskets* which may take up the fragments of gleanings which are left.

Verſ.

Verſ. 8, 9, 10.

Then ſaid Boaz *unto* Ruth, *Heareſt thou, my Daughter, goe to no other field to gather; neither goe from hence, but abide here by my Maidens.*

Let thy eyes be on the field which they doe reape, and goe after the Maidens. Have I not charged the ſervants, that they touch thee not? Moreover, when thou art thirſtie, go unto the veſſels, & drink of that which the ſervants have drawn.

Then ſhe fell on her face, and bowed her ſelfe to the ground, and ſaid unto him; Why have I found favour in thy eyes, that thou ſhouldſt know me, ſince I am a ſtranger?

MOthers and Nurſes are very carefull, tenderly to handle Infants, when they are but newly borne. So *Ruth*; Chriſt

Chriſt was newly formed in her, a young Convert, a freſh *Proſelyte:* and therefore *Boaz* uſeth her with all kindneſſe, both in workes and words; *Heareſt thou, my Daughter?*

Obſervation.

Aged perſons may terme younger people their Sonnes and Daughters, 1 *Sam.* 3. 6. And if they were perſons in Authoritie, though they were well-nigh equall in age, they uſed the ſame expreſſion. Thus *Joſeph* to his Brother *Benjamin*, *Gen.* 43. 29. *God be mercifull to thee, my Sonne.* Let young people therefore reverently obſerve their dutie and diſtance to their Seniors in Age, and Superiours in Authoritie: Yet I am afraid, men keepe not the method of *Jacobs* Children, the eldeſt ſitting downe according to his Age, and the youngeſt according to his Youth; but fulfill the Complaint of the Prophet, *The young preſume againſt the aged, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* Let aged perſons ſtrive to deſerve their reſpect, by demeaning themſelves gravely, and ſtriving to adde gracious hearts to gray haires: otherwiſe,

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Thirdly, in these words *Boaz* doth intimate, That if he gave a charge to the contrarie, none of his servants durst presume once to molest her.

Observation.

Where we see, Masters commands ought to sound Lawes in the eares of their servants, if they be lawfull. Indeed, if *Absolon* (2 *Sam.* 13. 28.) saith to his servants, *Kill Amnon, fear not, for have I not commanded you?* This command did not oblige, because the thing enjoyned was altogether ungodly. Otherwise, men must imitate the obedience of the Centurions servants; who said to the one. *Goe, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he commeth; and to his servant, Doe this, and he doth it.*

Coroll.

ſuch as are qualified like *Jethro's* deſcription of inferiour Judges, *Exod.*18. *men of courage, fearing God, dealing truly, hating covetouſneſſe.* And how-ever they priviledge them to be above the reſt of their ſervants, yet let them make them to know their dutie and their diſtance to their Maſters, leſt that come to paſſe which *Solomon* fore-telleth, *Prov.*29. *He that bringeth up his ſervant delicately in his youth, will make him like his ſonne at the laſt.* Let Stewards not be like that unjuſt one in the Goſpel, who made his Maſters Debtors write down fiftie meaſures of Wheat, and foureſcore meaſures of Oyle, when both ſeverally ſhould have been an hundred; but let them carefully diſcharge their Conſcience, in that Office wherein they are placed: whileſt inferiour ſervants, that are under their command, muſt neither grieve nor grudge to obey them, nor envie at their honour: But let this comfort thoſe underlings, that if they be wronged by theſe Stewards, their Appeale lyes open from them to their Maſter, who if good, will no doubt redreſſe their grievances.

Now if Stewards be neceſſarie in ordering of Families, ſurely men in authoritie are more neceſſarie, in governing the Church, and managing the Commonwealth. If a little Cock-Boat cannot be brought up a Tributarie Rivulet, without one to guide it; how ſhall a Caravan, a Gallioun, or Argoſie, ſayling in the vaſt Ocean, be brought into a Harbor, without a Pilot to conduct it? Let us therefore with all willingneſſe and humilitie ſubmit our ſelves to our Superiours, that ſo under them we may live a peaceable life, in all godlineſſe and honeſtie.

Whoſe is this Maid?

Boaz would know what thoſe perſons were that gleaned upon his Land; and good reaſon: for we ought not to proſtitute our liberalitie to all, though unknowne; but firſt we muſt examine who, and whence they be; otherwiſe, that which is given to worthleſſe perſons, is not given, but throwne away. I ſpeake not this to blunt the Charitie of any, who have often beſtowed their benevolence upon

upon Beggars unknowne and unſeene before; but if eaſily and with conveniencie (as *Boaz* could) they may attaine to know the qualities and conditions of ſuch perſons, before they diſpoſe their liberalitie unto them.

And the ſervant which was appointed.

He herein performed the part of a carefull ſervant, namely, fully to informe his Maſter. Servants ought ſo to inſtruct themſelves, as thereby to be able to give an account to their Lords, when they ſhall be called thereunto, and give them plenarie ſatisfaction and contentment in any thing belonging to their Office, wherein they ſhall be queſtioned. Now, whereas he doth not derogate or detract from *Ruth*, though a ſtranger, but ſets her forth with her due commendation; we gather, Servants when asked, ought to give the pure character of poore people to their Maſters, and no way to wrong or traduce them.

Which came and ſaid, Let me gather I pray.

See here *Ruths* honeſtie; ſhe would not preſume to gleane before ſhe had leave. Cleane contrarie is the practice of poore people now-adayes, which oft times take away things not onely without the knowledge, but even againſt the will of the owners. The Boy of the Prieſt, 1 *Sam.* 2. 16. when the Sacrifice was in offering, uſed to come with a *fleſh-hooke of three teeth*, and uſed to caſt it into the fat of the Sacrifice, making that his Fee, which ſo he fetcht out; if any gain-ſay'd him, he anſwered, *Thou ſhalt give it me now; or if thou wilt not, I will take it by force.* Thus poore people now-adayes, they caſt their hooke, their violent hands (gleaning the leane will not content them) into the fat, the beſt and principall of rich mens Eſtates, and breaking all Lawes of God and the King, they by maine force draw it unto themſelves. Not ſo *Ruth*; ſhe would not gleane without leave.

And

And ſtayed here from morning untill now.

See here her conſtancie in Induſtrie: Many are very diligent at the firſt ſetting forth, for a fit and a gird, for a ſnatch and away; but nothing violent, is long permanent: They are ſoone tyred, quickly wearie, and then turne from labour to lazineſſe. But *Ruth* continued in her labour *from the morning till now*; till Night, till the end of the Harveſt. O that we would imitate the conſtancie of *Ruth*, in the *working out of our ſalvation with feare and trembling!* Not onely to be induſtrious in the *Morning*, when we firſt enter into Chriſtianitie, but to hold out and to *perſevere even to the end of our lives.*

Onely ſhe tarried a little in the houſe.

No doubt ſome indiſpenſable buſineſſe detained her there; and probable it is, that a principall one was, to ſay her *Mattins*, to doe her Devotions, commend

her ſelfe with fervent prayer unto the Lord, to bleſſe her and her endeavours the day following. *A whet is no let*, ſaith the Proverb; Mowers loſe not any time, which they ſpend in whetting or grinding of their Sythes: our prayer to God in the Morning, before we enter on any buſineſſe, doth not hinder us in our dayes worke, but rather whets it, ſharpens it, ſets an edge on our dull ſoules, and makes our mindes to undertake our labours with the greater alacritie.

And here may I take juſt occaſion to ſpeake concerning *Gleaning*. Conſider firſt the antiquitie thereof, as being commanded by God, *Levit.* 19. 9. and 23. 22. Secondly, conſider the equitie thereof; it doth the Rich no whit of harme, it doth the Poore a great deale of good. One may ſay of it as *Lot* of *Zoar*; *Is it not a little one, and my ſoule ſhall live?* Is it not a pettie, a ſmall, exile courteſie, and the hearts of poore people ſhall be comforted thereby? *Reliquiæ Danaum, atque immitis Achillis*; the Remnant which hath eſcaped the edge of the Sythes, and avoided the hands of the Reapers. Had

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our Reapers the Eyes of Eagles, and the Clawes of Harpeyes, they could not ſee and ſnatch each ſcattered Eare which may well be allowed for the Reliefe of the Poore. When our Saviour ſaid to the woman of *Syrophœnicia*, *It is not good to take the Childrens Bread, and caſt it to the Dogs:* She anſwered, *Yea, Lord, but the Dogs eat of the Childrens Crummes that fall from their Table.* So, if any Miſers mutter, *It is not meet that my Bread ſhould be caſt unto poore people, to gleane Corne upon my Lands*; yea, but let them know, that poore people (which are no *Dogs*, but ſetting a little thick Clay aſide, as good as themſelves) may eat the *falling Crummes*, the ſcattered Eares, which they gather on the ground.

Uſe.

It may confute the Covetouſneſſe of many, which repine that the Poore ſhould have any benefit by them; and are ſo farre from ſuffering the Poore to gleane, that even they themſelves gleane from the Poore, and ſpeake much like

to churliſh *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. *Shall I take my Wheat, my Rye, and my Barley, which I have prepared for my Family, and give it to the Poore, which I know not whence they be?* Yea, ſome have ſo hard hearts, that they would leave their Graine to be deſtroyed by Beaſts and Vermine, rather then that the Poore ſhould receive any benefit thereby. Cruell people, which preferre their Hogs before Chriſts Sheep, Mice before Men, Crowes before Chriſtians.

But withall, Poore people muſt learne this Leſſon, to know the meaning of theſe two Pronounes, *Mine* and *Thine*; what belongs to their rich Maſters, and what pertaines to themſelves. The Sheep which had little ſpots, thoſe were *Jacobs* Fee; ſo the little ſpots, the looſe ſtraggling and ſcattered Eares, thoſe are the Poores: but as for the great ones, the handfulls, the arme-fulls, the Sheaves, the Shocks, the Cocks, theſe are none of theirs, but the rich Owners: and therefore let the Poore take heed how they put forth their hands to their neighbours goods.

Motive.

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One forcible Motive to perſwade the Rich to ſuffer the Poore to gleane, may be this: Even the greateſt, in reſpect of God, is but a gleaner. God, he is the Maſter of the Harveſt; all Gifts and Graces they are his, in an infinite meaſure; and every godly man, more or leſſe, gleanes from him. *Abraham* gleaned a great gleane of Faith; *Moſes*, of Meekneſſe; *Joſhuah*, of Valour; *Samſon*, of Strength; *Solomon*, of Wealth and Wiſdome; S. *Paul* of Knowledge, and the like. Now, if we would be glad at our hearts, that the Lord would give us free leave and libertie, for to gleane Graces out of his Harveſt, let us not grudge and repine, that poore people gleane a little gaine from our plentie. To conclude, when God hath multiplyed our *five Loaves*, that is, when of our little Seed he hath given us a great deale of increaſe, let poore people, like *Ruth* in the Text, be the *twelve Baskets* which may take up the fragments of gleanings which are left.

Verſ.

Verſ. 8, 9, 10.

Then ſaid Boaz *unto* Ruth, *Heareſt thou, my Daughter, goe to no other field to gather; neither goe from hence, but abide here by my Maidens.*

Let thy eyes be on the field which they doe reape, and goe after the Maidens. Have I not charged the ſervants, that they touch thee not? Moreover, when thou art thirſtie, go unto the veſſels, & drink of that which the ſervants have drawn.

Then ſhe fell on her face, and bowed her ſelfe to the ground, and ſaid unto him; Why have I found favour in thy eyes, that thou ſhouldſt know me, ſince I am a ſtranger?

MOthers and Nurſes are very carefull, tenderly to handle Infants, when they are but newly borne. So *Ruth*; Chriſt

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Corell.

Coroll.

Now, if we ought to be thus dutifull to our Earthly Maſters; ſurely, if the Lord of Heaven enjoyneth us any thing, we ought to doe it without any doubt, or delay. Were there no Hell to puniſh, no Heaven to reward, no Promiſes pronounced to the godly, no Threatnings denounced to the wicked; yet this is a ſufficient reaſon to make us doe a thing, becauſe God hath enjoyned it; this a convincing argument to make us refraine from it, becauſe he hath forbidden it.

Then ſhe fell on her face, and bowed.

Queſtion.

Was not this too much honour to give to any mortall Creature? And doth it not come within the compaſſe of the breach of the ſecond Commandement, *Thou ſhalt not bow downe and worſhip them?* Eſpecially ſeeing godly *Mordecai* refuſed to bend his knee to *Haman.*

Anſwer.

Civill honour may and muſt be given to all in Authoritie, according to the uſuall geſtures of the Countrey: Now ſuch *bowing* was the cuſtome of the Eaſterne people, *Gen.* 33. 3. As for *Mordecai*'s inſtance, it makes not againſt this; he being therein either immediately warranted by God, or elſe he refuſed to bow to *Haman* as being an *Amalakite*, betwixt which curſed Brood and the *Iſraelites*, the Lord commanded an eternall enmitie.

Coroll.

Now, if *Ruth* demeaned her ſelfe with ſuch reverent geſture to *Boaz*, how reverent ought our geſture to be, when we approach into the preſence of God. Indeed, *God is a Spirit, and he will be worſhipped in Spirit and Truth*; yet ſo, that he will have the outward decent poſture of the bodie to accompanie the inward ſinceritie of the ſoule.

And

And ſaid, Why have I found favour.

As if ſhe had ſaid: When I reflect my eyes upon my ſelfe, I cannot reade in my ſelfe the ſmalleſt worth, to deſerve ſo great a favour from thy hands; and therefore I muſt acknowledge my ſelfe exceedingly beholden to you. But principally I lift up my eyes to the providence of the Lord of Heaven; *mens hearts are in his hand as the Rivers of Water; he turneth them whither he pleaſeth:* He it is that hath mollified thy heart, to ſhew this undeſerved kindneſſe unto me. Here we ſee *Ruths* humilitie. Many now-adayes would have made a contrarie conſtruction of *Boaz* his Charitie, and reaſoned thus: Surely he ſeeth in me ſome extraordinarie worth, whereof as yet I have not taken notice in my ſelfe; and therefore hereafter I will maintaine a better opinion of my owne deſerts. But *Ruth* confeſſeth her owne unworthineſſe: And from her example, let us learne to be humbly and heartily thankfull to thoſe which beſtow any courteſie or kindneſſe upon us.

Since I am a ſtranger.

She amplifies his favour, from the indignitie of her owne perſon, being a ſtranger.

Coroll.

Oh then, if *Ruth* interpreted it ſuch a kindneſſe, that *Boaz* tooke notice of her, being a ſtranger; how *great is the love of God to us, who loved us in Chriſt when we were ſtrangers and aliens* from the Commonwealth of *Iſrael?* As the never-failing foundation of the Earth is firmely faſtned for ever fleeting, yet ſetled on no other ſubſtance then its owne ballaſted weight; ſo Gods love was founded on neither cauſe nor condition in the Creature, but iſſued onely out of his owne free favour. So that in this reſpect, we may all ſay unto God what *Ruth* doth unto *Boaz* in the Text; *Why have we found favour in thine eyes, that thou ſhouldeſt take knowledge of us, ſeeing we were but ſtrangers?*

Verſ.

Verſ. 11, 12.

And Boaz *anſwered and ſaid unto her, It hath fully been ſhewed me, all that thou haſt done unto thy Mother in law ſince the death of thine Husband; and how thou haſt left thy Father and thy Mother, and the Land of thy Nativitie, and art come unto a people which thou kneweſt not heretofore.*

The Lord recompence thy worke, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Iſrael, *under whoſe wings thou art come to truſt.*

It hath been fully ſhewed me all.

MOre then probable it is, that *Boaz* had received his intelligence immediately from *Naomi*.

Obſervation.

How-ever, here we may ſee, the vertues of worthy perſons will never want Trumpets to ſound them to the world. The *Jewes* were the *Centurions* Trumpet to our Saviour, *Luke* 7. 5. And the Widowes *Dorcas* her Trumpet to S. *Peter*, *Acts* 9. 39. Let this encourage men in their vertuous proceedings, knowing that their worthy deeds ſhall not be buried in obſcuritie, but ſhall finde tongues in their lively colours to expreſſe them. *Abſolon* having no Children, and deſirous to perpetuate his Name, erected a Pillar in the Kings Dale; and the ſame is called *Abſolon*'s Pillar unto this day. But the moſt compendious way for men to conſecrate their Memories to Eternitie, is to erect a Pillar of vertuous Deeds; which ſhall ever remaine, even when the moſt laſting Monuments in the World ſhall be conſumed, as not able to ſatisfie the *Boulimee* of all-conſuming Time. And to put the worſt, grant the envious men with a Cloud of Calumnies ſhould eclipſe the beames of vertuous

vertuous Memories from ſhining in the World, yet this may be their comfort, that *God that ſees in ſecret, will reward them openly.* Moreover, it is the dutie of ſuch who have received Courteſies from others, to profeſſe and expreſſe the ſame as occaſion ſhall ſerve; that ſo their Benefactors may publikely receive their deſerved commendation. Thus ſurely *Naomi* had done by *Ruth*; from whoſe mouth no doubt, though not immediately, her vertues were ſounded in the eares of *Boaz. It hath been fully ſhewed me all.*

Here now followeth a Summarie, reckoning up of the worthy Deeds of *Ruth*; which, becauſe they have been fully diſcourſed of in the former Chapter, it would be needleſſe againe to inſiſt upon them: Proceed we therefore to *Boaz* his Prayer.

The Lord recompence thee.

As if he had ſaid: Indeed, *Ruth*, that courteſie which I afforded thee, to gleane upon my Land without any diſturbance, comes farre ſhort both of thy deſerts, and

my deſires. All that I wiſh is this, That what I am unable to requite, the Lord himſelfe would *recompence:* May he give thee *a full reward* of Graces internall, externall, eternall; here, hereafter; on Earth, in Heaven; while thou liveſt, when thou dieſt, in Grace, in Glory, *a full reward.*

Where firſt we may learne, that when we are unable to requite peoples deſerts of our ſelves, we muſt make up our want of workes with good Wiſhes to God for them. Indeed, we muſt not doe like thoſe in the ſecond of S. *James, verſe* 16. who onely ſaid to the Poore, *Depart in peace, warme your ſelves, and fill your bellies*, and yet beſtowed nothing upon them: We muſt not both begin and conclude with good Wiſhes, and doe nothing elſe; but we muſt obſerve *Boaz* his method: firſt, to begin to doe good to thoſe that being vertuous, are in diſtreſſe; and then, where we fall ſhort in requiting them, to make the reſt up, with heartie Wiſhes to God for them.

Obſer-

Obſervation.

But the maine Obſervation is this; *There is a recompence of a full reward upon the good workes of his ſervants*, *Gen.*15. 1. *Moreover, by them is thy ſervant taught; and in keeping them, there is great reward*, *Pſal.*19. 11. Verily, there is a Reward for the Righteous; doubtleſſe, there is a God that judgeth the Earth; Godlineſſe hath the promiſes of this Life, and of the Life to come.

Uſe 1.

It may ſerve to confute ſuch falſe Spies as rayſe wrong Reports of the Land of *Canaan*, of the Chriſtian Profeſſion, ſaying with the wicked, *Mal.* 3. 14. *It is in vaine to ſerve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his Commandements, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts?* Slanderous Tongues! which one day ſhall be juſtly fined in the Starre-Chamber of Heaven, *Ob ſcandala magnatum*, for ſlandering of Gods noble ſervants, and their Profeſſion, for indeed, the

the Chriſtian Life is moſt comfortable; for we may both take a liberall Portion, and have a ſanctified uſe of Gods Creatures: beſides, within we have peace of Conſcience, and joy in the Holy-Ghoſt in ſome meaſure; one Dramme whereof is able to ſugar the moſt wormewood affliction.

Uſe 2.

When we begin to feele our ſelves to lagge in Chriſtianitie, let us ſpurre on our affections with the meditation of that *full reward* which we ſhall in due time receive; with our Saviour, let us *looke to the Joyes which are ſet before us*; and with *Moſes*, let us have *an eye to the recompence of Reward*: Yet ſo, that though we look at this *Reward*, yet alſo we muſt look through it, and beyond it. This meditation of the *Reward*, is a good place for our ſoules to bait at, but a bad place for our ſoules to lodge in: we muſt mount our mindes higher, namely, to aime at the glory of God; at which all our actions muſt be directed, though there were no Reward propounded unto them. Yet

ſince

ſince it is Gods goodneſſe, to propound unto us a Reward, over and beſides his owne Glory; this ought ſo much the more to incite us to diligence in our Chriſtian calling: For if *Othniel, Judges* 1. behaved himſelfe ſo valiantly againſt the enemies of *Iſrael*, in hope to obtaine *Achſah, Calebs* Daughter, to Wife; how valiantly ought we to demeane our ſelves againſt our ſpirituall enemies, knowing that we ſhall one day be married unto our Saviour in eternall happineſſe? And this is a *full Reward.*

Objection.

But ſome may ſay, Theſe termes of *Recompence* and *Reward* may ſeeme to favour the *Popiſh* Tenent, That our good workes merit at Gods hand.

Anſwer.

Reward and *Recompence* unto our good workes are not due unto us for any worth of our owne, but meerely from Gods free favour and gracious promiſe. For, to make

a

a thing truly meritorious of a Reward, it is required, firſt, that the thing meriting be our owne, and not anothers; now our beſt workes are none of ours, but Gods Spirit in us: ſecondly, it is requiſite that we be not bound of dutie to doe it; now we are bound to doe all the good deeds which we doe, and ſtill remaine but *unprofitable ſervants*: thirdly, there muſt be a proportion betweene the thing meriting, and the Reward merited; now there is no proportion betweene our ſtained and imperfect workes, (for ſuch are our beſt) and that infinite weight of glory wherewith God will reward us. It remaines therefore, that no Reward is given us for our owne inherent worth, but meerely for Gods free favour, who crownes his owne workes in us.

Under whoſe wings thou art come to truſt.

A Metaphor; it is borrowed from an Hen, which with her clocking ſummons together her ſtragling Chickens, and then out-ſtretcheth the fanne of her wings to cover

cover them. Familiarly it is uſed in Scripture, and amongſt other places, by our Saviour, *Math.* 23. *How oft would I have gathered thee together, as an Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* And juſt it was with God, becauſe the fooliſh Chickens of the *Iewes* would not come to Chriſt, the Hen, calling them, to ſuffer them to be devoured by the Eagle, the Imperiall Armie of the *Romans*.

Obſervation.

Gods love and care over his Children, is as great as an Hen's over her Chickens. Now the Hen's wings doe the Chickens a double good.

Firſt, they keepe them from the Kite; ſo Gods providence protecteth his ſervants from that Kite, the Devill: For as the Kite uſeth to fetch many Circuits, and Circles, and long hovers and flutters round about, and at length ſpying her advantage, pops downe on the poore Chicken for a prey; ſo the Devill, who as it is *Iob* 1. 7. *compaſſeth the Earth to and fro, and walketh through it*, and at length ſpying

ing an opportunitie, pitcheth and ſetleth himſelfe upon ſome poore Soule, to devoure it, if the wings of Gods providence (as the Citie of Refuge) doe not reſcue him from his clutches.

Secondly, the Hen with her Chickens broodes her Chickens, and makes them thereby to thrive and grow. In Summer her wings are a Canopie, to keepe her Chickens from the heat of the ſcorching Sunne; and in Winter they are a Mantle, to defend them from the injurie of the pinching cold: So Gods providence and protection makes his Children to ſprout, thrive, and proſper under it: in Proſperitie, Gods providence keepeth them from the heat of Pride; in Adverſitie, it preſerveth them from being benummed with frozen Deſpaire.

Vſe.

Let us all then ſtrive to runne, to hide our ſelves under the wings of the God of Heaven. Hearke how the Hen clocks in the *Pſalmes*; *Call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will heare thee, and thou ſhalt*

ſhalt prayſe me: How ſhe clocks in the *Canticles*, *Returne O Shulamite, returne, returne, that we may behold thee:* How ſhe clocketh, *Math.7.7. Aske and ye ſhall have, ſeeke and ye ſhall finde, knock and it ſhall be opened unto you:* How ſhe clocks, *Math.11. Come unto me all ye that are wearie and heavie laden, and I will eaſe you.* Let not us now be like ſullen Chickens, which ſit moaping under a rotten Hedge, or proating under an old Wood-pile, when the Hen calleth them. Let not us truſt to the broken Wall of our owne Strength, or think to lurke under the tottering Hedge of our owne Wealth, or winde-ſhaken Reeds of our unconſtant Friends; but flye to God, that he may ſtretch his wings over us, as the Cherubins did over the Mercie-Seat. And as alwayes in Day-time, ſo eſpecially at Night, when we goe to Bed, (for Chickens when going to Rooſt, alwayes run to the Hen) let us commend our ſelves with prayer to his Providence, that he would be pleaſed to preſerve us from the dangers of the Night enſuing; *truſting* with *Ruth* in the Text, *under the wings of the Lord God of Iſrael.*

Verſ.

Verſ. 13, 14.

Then ſhe ſaid, Let me finde favour in the ſight of my Lord; for thou haſt comforted me, and ſpoken comfortably unto thy Maid, though I be not like to one of thy Maids.

And Boaz *ſaid unto her, At the meale time come thou hither, and eate of the Bread, and dip thy morſell in the vineger. And ſhe ſate beſide the Reapers, and he reached her parched Corne; and ſhe did eate, and was ſufficed, and left thereof.*

BOaz had formerly called *Ruth* Daughter; now *Ruth* ſtileth him, Lord. When great ones carry themſelves familiarly to meaner perſons, meaner perſons muſt demeane themſelves reſpectively to great ones. Indeed, with baſe and ſordid natures familiaritie breeds contempt; but ingenuous

ingenuous natures will more awfully obſerve their diſtance towards their Superiours, of whom they are moſt courteouſly intreated. And if great Perſonages ſhould caſt up their accompts, they ſhould finde themſelves not loſers, but gainers of honour, by their kinde uſage of their Inferiours. Thoſe Starres ſeeme to us the greateſt, and ſhine the brighteſt, which are ſet the loweſt. Great men, which ſometimes ſtoop, and ſtoop low in their humble carriage to others, commonly get the greateſt luſtre of credit and eſteeme in the hearts of thoſe that be vertuous.

And ſpoken comfortably unto thy Maid.

In *Hebrew*, *haſt ſpoken unto the heart.* A comfortable ſpeech, is a word ſpoken to the heart.

Meditation.

Oh that Miniſters had this facultie of *Boaz*, his ſpeech; not to tickle the eares, teach the heads, or pleaſe the braines of the people, but that their Sermons might

ſoake and ſink to the root of their hearts. But though this may be endeavoured by them, it cannot be performed of them, without Gods ſpeciall aſſiſtance. We may leave our words at the outward porch of mens eares, but his Spirit muſt conduct and lodge them in the Cloſet of their hearts.

Though I be not like to one of thy Maids.

Meaning, becauſe ſhe was a *Moabiteſſe*, a Stranger and Alien, they Natives of the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*; in this reſpect, ſhe was farre their inferiour.

Obſervation.

The godly ever conceive very humbly and meanly of themſelves; *Moſes*, Exod. 4. 10. *Gedeon*, Judg. 6. 15. *Abigail*, 1 Sam. 25. 41. Eſay 6. 5. Jerem. 1. 6. *John Baptiſt*, Math. 3. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 15. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe they are moſt privie to and ſenſible of their owne infirmities; their Corruptions, which cleave unto them,

them, are ever before their eyes. These black feet abate their thoughts, when puffed up with Pride for their painted Traine of other Graces. On the other side, the wicked set ever the greatest price on their owne worth; they behold their owne supposed Vertues through magnifying Glasses, and think with *Haman*, that none deserves better to be honoured by the King, but themselves.

Use.

Let us endeavour to obtaine humilitie with *Ruth*; a vertue of most worth, and yet which costeth least to keepe: Yet notwithstanding, it is both lawfull and needfull for us to know our owne worth, and to take an exact survey of those Graces which God hath bestowed upon us. First, that we may know thereby the better to proportion our thanks to God: Secondly, that we may know how much good the Church and Common-wealth expecteth to be performed by us. And lastly, that if any should basely insult and domineer over us, we may in humilitie stand upon

the lawfull justification of our selves, and our owne sufficiencie, as S. *Paul* did against the false Apostles at *Corinth*; alwayes provided, that we give God the glory, and professe our selves to be but *unprofitable servants*.

And Boaz *said unto her, At the meale time come thou hither, and eate of the Bread.*

Two things herein are commendable in *Boaz*, and to be imitated by Masters of Families.

First, That he had provided wholesome and competent foode for his owne servants; so ought all house-holders to doe. And herein let them propound God for their President, for he maintaineth the greatest Family; all creatures are his servants, and *he giveth them meat in due season, he openeth his hand, and filleth with his blessing every living thing.*

Secondly, As *Boaz* provided Meat for his servants, so he allowed them certaine set convenient Times wherein they might quietly eate their Meat. But as the people of

of the *Jewes* preſſed ſo faſt upon our Saviour, (*Mark.*3. 20.) that he had not ſo much leiſure as to *eate Bread*, and take neceſſarie ſuſtenance: ſo, ſuch is the gripple nature of many covetous Maſters, that they will ſo taske and tye their ſervants to their worke, as not to afford them ſeaſonable Reſpite to feede themſelves.

And dip thy morſell in the vineger.

Obſervation.

The Fare of Gods ſervants in ancient time, though wholeſome, was very homely: Here they had onely Bread and Vineger, and parched Corne. For a thouſand five hundred and ſixtie yeares the World fed upon Herbes, & the Scripture maketh mention ſince of meane and ſparing Fare of many godly men. It may therefore confute the Gluttonie and Epicuriſme of our Age, conſiſting both in the ſuperfluous number of Diſhes, and in the unlawfull nature of them. We rifle the Ayre for daintie Fowle, we ranſack the Sea for

delicious Fiſh, we rob the Earth for delicate Fleſh, to ſuſpend the doubtfull Appetite betwixt varietie of Dainties. As for the nature of them, many are meere needleſſe Whetſtones of Hunger, which inſtead of ſatisfying doe encreaſe it. And as in the *Spaniſh Inquiſition* ſuch is their exquiſite Crueltie, that having brought one to the doore of Death by their Tortures, they then revive him by Cordials; and then againe re-killing him with their Torments, fetch him againe with comfortable things; thus often re-iterating their Crueltie: So, men having killed their Appetite with good Cheare, ſeeke with Diſhes made for the nonce to enliven it againe, to the ſuperfluous waſting of Gods good creatures, and much endammaging the health of their owne bodies. But leaving them, let us be content with that competent Foode which God hath allotted us, knowing, that *better is a Dinner of Herbes with peace, then a ſtalled Oxe with ſtrife*; and God, if it pleaſeth him, can ſo bleſſe *Daniels* Pulſe unto us, that by meane Fare we ſhall be made more ſtrong and healthfull, then

thoſe

thoſe who ſurfet on exceſſe of Dainties.

And ſhe did eate and was ſufficed.

It is a great bleſſing of God, when he gives ſuch ſtrength and vertue to his creatures, as to ſatisfie our hunger; and the contrarie, is a great puniſhment: For as, (1 *Kings* 1. 1.) when they heaped abundance of *Clothes* on aged King *David*, yet his decayed body felt no *warmth* at all; ſo God ſo curſeth the Meat to ſome, that though they cramme downe never ſo much into their bellies, yet ſtill their hunger encreaſeth with their Meat, and they finde, that Nature is not truly contented and ſatisfied therewith.

And left thereof.

Hence we learne, the over-plus which remaineth after we have fed our ſelves, muſt neither be ſcornfully caſt away, nor careleſly left alone, but it muſt be thriftily kept: Imitating herein the example of our Saviour; who, though he could

make *five Loaves* ſwell to ſufficient foode for five thouſand men, yet gave he command, that the *fragments* ſhould be carefully basketted up.

Verſ. 15, 16, 17.

And when ſhe aroſe to gleane, Boaz *commanded his ſervants, ſaying, Let her gather among the ſheaves, and doe not rebuke her;*

Alſo let fall ſome of the ſheaves for her, and let it lie, that ſhe may gather it up, and rebuke her not.

So ſhe gleaned in the field untill Evening, and ſhe threſhed that ſhe had gathered, and it was about an Ephah *of Barley.*

BEfore I enter into theſe words, behold an Objection ſtands at the doore of them, which muſt firſt be removed.

Ob-

Objection.

One may ſay to *Ruth*, as our Saviour to the young man in the Goſpel, *One thing is wanting*. Here is no mention of any *Grace* ſhe ſaid to God either before or after Meat.

Anſwer.

Charitie will not ſuffer me to condemne *Ruth* of forgetfulneſſe herein: She who formerly had been ſo thankfull to *Boaz*, the Conduit-Pipe, how can ſhe be thought to be ungratefull to God, the Fountaine of all favours? Rather I think it is omitted of the holy Spirit to be written downe; who, had he regiſtred each particular action of Gods Saints, (as it is *John* 21. 25.) *the world would not have been able to containe the Books which ſhould be written.*

Let none therefore take occaſion to omit this dutie, becauſe here not ſpecified; rather let them be exhorted to performe it, becauſe in other places it is both

both commanded by Precept, and commended by Practice, *Deut.*8.10. 1 *Cor.*10. 31. Yea, in the 27. of the *Acts*, the Mariners and Souldiers, (people ordinarily not very Religious) though they had fasted fourteene dayes together, yet none of them were so unmannerly, or rather so prophane, as to snatch any Meat, before S. *Paul* had given *Thanks*. Let us not therefore be like *Esau*, who in stead of giving a Blessing to God for his Pottage, sold his Blessing to his Brother for his Pottage: but though our haste or hunger be never so great, let us dispense with so much time, as therein to crave a Blessing from God, wherein his creatures are sanctified; as no doubt *Ruth* did, though not recorded.

And when she arose to gleane.

The end of feeding, is to fall to our Calling. Let us not therefore with *Israel*, sit downe to eate and to drinke, and so rise up againe to play; but let us eate to live, not live to eate. 'Tis not matter, we need not make the Clay-Cottage of our Body

Body much larger then it is, by immoderate feasting; it is enough, if we maintaine it so with competent food, that God our Landlord may not have just cause to sue us for want of Reparations.

Boaz *commanded his servants, saying, Let her gather among the sheaves, and doe not rebuke her.*

Observation.

It is lawfull for us, according to our pleasure, to extend our favours more to one then to another. *Ruth* alone, not all the gleaners, was priviledged to gather among the sheaves uncontrouled. Give leave to *Jacob* to bequeath a double Portion to *Joseph*, his best beloved sonne; for *Joseph* to make the Messe of *Benjamin* five times greater then any other of his Brethren; for *Elkanah* to leave a worthier Portion to *Hannah* then to *Peninnah*: the reason is, because there can be no wrong done in those things which are free favours. I am not lesse just to him, to whom I give lesse; but I am more mer-

mercifull to him, to whom I give more. Yet in the dealing and diſtributing of Liberalitie, let thoſe of the Family of Faith be eſpecially reſpected; and of theſe, thoſe chiefely which, as the Apoſtle ſaith, are worthy of a *double honour*.

Corollarie.

Shall it not therefore be lawfull for the Lord of Heaven to beſtow Wealth, Honour, Wiſdome, effectuall Grace, Bleſſings outward and inward on one, and denie them to another? You therefore, whom God hath ſuffered to gleane among the Sheaves, and hath ſcattered whole handfulls for you to gather; you that abound and flow with his favours, be heartily thankfull unto him; he hath not dealt ſo with every one, neither have all ſuch a large meaſure of his Bleſſings. And ye common gleaners, who are faine to follow farre after, and glad to take up the ſcattered eares, who have a ſmaller proportion of his favour, be neither angry with God, nor grieved at your ſelves, nor envious at your Brethren; but be

content

content with your condition: it is the Lord, and let him doe what is good in his eyes; ſhall not he have abſolute power to doe with his owne what he thinketh good, when *Boaz* can command, that *Ruth*, and no other, may gleane among the ſheaves without *rebuke*?

Had the ſervants of *Boaz*, without expreſſe warrant and command from their Maſter, ſcattered handfulls for her to gleane, their action had not been Charitie, but flat Theft and Robberie; for they were to improve their Maſters goods to his greateſt profit. On the other ſide, it had been a great fault, to with-hold and with-draw any thing from her, which their Maſter commanded them to give. Yet, as the unjuſt Steward in *Luke* made his Maſters Debts to be leſſe then they were; ſo many ſervants nowadayes make their Maſters gifts to be leſſe then they are, giving leſſe then he hath granted, and diſpoſing leſſe then he hath directed. Men commonly pay Toll for paſſing through great Gates, or over common Bridges; ſo when the Liberalitie

of

of Maſters goeth through the Gate of their ſervants hands, and Bridges of their fingers, it is conſtrained to pay Tribute and Cuſtome to their ſervants, before it commeth to thoſe Poore to whom it was intended. Thus many men make the augmentation of their owne Eſtates, from the diminution of their Maſters Bountie.

Queſtion.

But ſome may ſay, Why did not *Boaz* beſtow a quantitie of Corne upon *Ruth*, and ſo ſend her home unto her Mother?

Anſwer.

He might have done ſo, but he choſe rather to keep her ſtill a working. Where we learne, that is the beſt Charitie which ſo relieves peoples wants, as that they are ſtill continued in their Calling. For as he who teacheth one to ſwimme, though happily he will take him by the Chinne, yet he expecteth that the learner ſhall nimbly ply the Oares of his hands and feet, and ſtrive and ſtruggle with all his ſtrength

ſtrength to keepe himſelfe above water: ſo thoſe who are beneficiall to poore people, may juſtly require of them, that they uſe both their hands to worke and feet to goe in their Calling, and themſelves take all due labour, that they may not ſinke in the Gulfe of Penurie. Relieve an Husbandman, yet ſo, as that he may ſtill continue in his Husbandry; a Tradeſ-man, yet ſo, as he may ſtill goe on in his Trade; a poore Scholar, yet ſo, as he may ſtill proceed in his Studies. Hereby the Common-wealth ſhall be a gainer, Drones bring no Honey to the Hive, but the painfull hand of each privat man contributes ſome profit to the publike good. Hereby the able poore, the more diligent they be, the more bountifull men will be to them; while their bodies are freed from many diſeaſes, their ſoules from many ſinnes, whereof Idleneſſe is the Mother. Lazineſſe makes a breach in our Soule, where the Devill doth aſſault us with greateſt advantage; and when we are moſt idle in our Vocations, then he is moſt buſie in his Temptations. A reverend Miniſter was wont to ſay, that the Devill never tempted

tempted him more then on Mondayes, when (becauſe his former Weekes Taske was newly done, and that for the Weeke to come ſix dayes diſtant) he tooke moſt libertie to refreſh himſelfe.

Since therefore ſo much good commeth from Induſtrie, I could wiſh there were a publike *Vineyard*, into which all they ſhould be ſent, who *ſtand lazing in the Market-place till the eleventh houre of the day*. Would all poore and impotent were well placed in an Hoſpitall, all poore and able well diſpoſed in a Work-houſe; and the common Stocks of Townes ſo layd out, as they thereby might be imployed.

So ſhe gleaned in the field
untill evening.

The Night is onely that which muſt end our labours: onely the Evening muſt beg us a Play, to depart out of the School of our Vocation, with promiſe next Morning to returne againe; *Man goeth out to his labour untill Evening*. Let ſuch then be blamed, who in their working make their Night to come before the Noone,

each

each day of their labour being ſhorter then that of S. *Lucy*; and after a ſpurt in their Calling for ſome few houres, they relapſe againe to lazineſſe.

And ſhe threſhed what ſhe had gathered.

The Materialls of the Temple were ſo hewed and carved, both Stone and Wood, before that they were brought unto *Hieruſalem*, that there was not ſo much as the noyſe of an *Hammer heard in the Temple*. So *Ruth* fits all things in a readineſſe, before ſhe goes home: What formerly ſhe gleaned, now ſhe threſhed; that ſo no noyſe might be made at home, to diſturbe her aged Mother. Here we ſee Gods ſervants, though well deſcended, diſdaine not any homely, if honeſt, worke for their owne living: *Sarah* kneaded Cakes, *Rebeccah* drew Water, *Rachel* fed Sheepe, *Thamar* baked Cakes. *Suetonius* reporteth of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, that he made his Daughters to learne to ſpinne; and *Pantaleon* relates the ſame of *Charles* the Great. Yet now-adayes, (ſuch is the

pride of the World) people of farre meaner qualitie ſcorne ſo baſe imployments.

And it was about an Ephah *of Barley.*

An *Ephah* contained ten *Omers*, *Exod.* 16. 36. An *Omer* of *Mannah* was the proportion allowed for a mans one day meat. Thus *Ruth* had gleaned upon the quantitie of a Buſhell; ſuch was her Induſtry, in diligent beſtirring her ſelfe; *Boaz* his Bountie, in ſcattering for her to gather; and above all, God his Bleſſing, who gave ſo good ſucceſſe unto her. *Ruth* having now done gleaning, did not ſtay behind in the field, as many now-adayes begin their worke when others end; if that may be termed worke, to filch and ſteale; as if the darke Night would be a Veyle to cover their deedes of Darkneſſe: but home ſhe haſteneth to her Mother, as followeth.

Verſ.

Verſ. 18, 19.

And ſhe tooke it up, and went into the Citie, and her Mother in law ſaw what ſhe had gathered: alſo ſhe tooke forth, and gave to her that which ſhe had reſerved, when ſhe was ſufficed.

Then her Mother in law ſaid unto her, Where haſt thou gleaned to day? And where wroughteſt thou? Bleſſed be he that knew thee: And ſhe ſhewed her Mother in law with whom ſhe had wrought, and ſaid, The mans name with whom I wrought to day, is Boaz.

And ſhe tooke it up.

SEe here, the ſhoulders of Gods Saints are wonted to the bearing of Burthens: Little *Iſaac* carryed the Faggot,

wherewith himſelfe was to be ſacrificed; our Saviour his owne Croſſe, till his faintneſſe craved *Simon* of *Cyrene* to be his ſucceſſor. Yet let not Gods Saints be diſ-heartened: if their Father hath a *Bottle wherein he puts the teares* which they ſpend; ſure he hath a Ballance, wherein he weighs the Burthens which they beare; he keepes a Note, to what weight their Burthens amount, and (no doubt) will accordingly comfort them.

Thoſe are to be confuted, who with the *Scribes*, Math. 23. 4. *binde heavie burthens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on the backs of others, but for their owne part they will not ſo much as touch them with one of their fingers:* Yea, ſome are ſo proud, that they will not carry their owne Provender, things for their owne ſuſtenance; had they been under *Ruths Ephah* of Barley, with *David* in *Sauls* Armour, they could not have gone under the weight of it, becauſe never uſed unto it.

And

And her Mother in law ſaw what ſhe had gathered.

Namely, *Ruth* ſhewed it unto her, and then *Naomi* ſaw it. Children are to preſent to their Parents view all which they get by their owne labour; otherwiſe doe many Children now-adayes: As *Ananias* and *Saphira* brought *part of the Money, and depoſed it at the Apoſtles feet*, but reſerved the reſt for themſelves; ſo they can be content to ſhew to their Parents ſome parcell of their gaines, whileſt they keepe the remnant ſecretly to themſelves.

Alſo ſhe tooke forth, and gave to her.

Learne we from hence; Children, if able, are to cheriſh and feed their Parents, if poore and aged. Have our Parents performed the parts of Pelicans to us, let us doe the dutie of Storkes to them: Would all Children would pay as well for the *partie-coloured Coats* which their Parents doe give them, as *Joſeph* did for

his, who maintained his Father and his Brethren in the Famine in *Egypt*. Thinke on thy Mothers ſickneſſe, when thou waſt conceived; ſorrow, when thou waſt borne; trouble, when thou waſt nurſt: She was cold, whileſt thou waſt warme; went, whileſt thou layd'ſt ſtill; waked, whileſt thou ſlept'ſt; faſted, whileſt thou fed'ſt: Theſe are eaſier to be conceived then expreſs'd, eaſier deſerved then requited. Say not therefore to thy Father according to the Doctrine of the *Phariſes*, *Corban*, it is a gift, if thou profiteſt by me; but confeſſe that it is a true Debt, and thy bounden dutie, if thou beeſt able, to relieve them: ſo did *Ruth* to *Naomi*, who was but her Mother in law.

Which ſhe had reſerved when ſhe was ſuffered.

Obſervation.

We muſt not ſpend all at once, but providently reſerve ſome for afterwards; we muſt not ſpeake all at once, without *Jeſuiticall* reſervation of ſome things ſtill in

in our hearts; not ſpend all at once, without thriftie reſervation of ſomething ſtill in our hands. Indeed our Saviour ſaith, *Care not for to morrow, for to morrow ſhall care for it ſelfe:* but that is not meant of the care of providence, which is lawfull and neceſſarie; but of the care of diffidence, which is wicked and ungodly. Thoſe are to be blamed, which as *Abiſhai* ſaid to *David* concerning *Saul, I will ſtrike him but once, and I will ſtrike him no more.* So many men, with one act of Prodigalitie, give the bane and mortall wound to their Eſtates, with one exceſſive Feaſt, one coſtly Sute of Clothes, one waſtfull Night of Gaming, they ſmite their Eſtates under the fifth Rib, which alwayes is mortall in Scripture, ſo that it never reviveth againe. But let us ſpare where we may, that ſo we may ſpend where we ſhould: in the ſeven yeares of Plentie let us provide for the ſeven yeares of Famine; and to make good conſtruction of our Eſtates, let us as well obſerve the Future as the Preſent Tenſe.

Then her Mother in law ſaid unto her, Where haſt thou gleaned to day?

Theſe words were not uttered out of Jealouſie, as if *Naomi* ſuſpected that *Ruth* had diſhoneſtly come by her Corne; (for Charitie is not ſuſpitious, but ever faſtens the moſt favourable Comments upon the actions of thoſe whom it affects) but ſhe did it out of a deſire to know who had been ſo bountifull unto her. Yet hence may we learne, that Parents, after the example of *Naomi*, may and ought to examine their Children, how and where they ſpend their time: For hereby they ſhall prevent a deale of miſchiefe, whileſt their Children will be more watchfull what Companie they keepe, as expecting with feare at Night to be examined. Neither can ſuch Fathers be excuſed, who never ſay to their Children, as *David* to *Adonijah*, *Why doeſt thou ſo?* But ſuffer them to rove and range at their owne pleaſure. *Am I, ſay they, my ſonnes keeper? He is old enough, let him looke after himſelfe.*

Now,

Now, as for thoſe *Joaſhes*, whoſe *Jehoiada's* are dead, thoſe young men whoſe Friends and Fathers are deceaſed, who now muſt have Reaſon for their Ruler, or rather Grace for their Guide and Governer; Let ſuch know, that indeed they have none to aske them as the Angel did *Hagar*, *Whence commeſt thou, and whither goeſt thou?* None to examine them, as *Eliab* did *David*, *Wherefore art thou come downe hither?* None to queſtion them, as *Naomi* did *Ruth*, *Where wroughteſt thou to day?* But now, as S. *Paul* ſaid of the *Gentiles*, that *having no Law, they were a Law unto themſelves*: ſo muſt ſuch young perſons endeavour, that having no Examiners, they may be Examiners to themſelves, and at Night, accordingly as they have ſpent their time, either to condemne or acquit their owne actions.

Bleſſed be he that knew thee.

1 *Kings* 22. The man ſhot an Arrow at unawares, yet God directed it to the Chinke of the Armour of guiltie *Ahab*: But *Naomi* doth here dart and ejaculate

out

out a prayer, and that at Rovers, aiming at no one particular Marke; *Blessed be he that knew thee*: Yet, no doubt, was it not in vaine; but God made it light on the head of bountifull *Boaz*, who deserved it.

Learne we from hence, upon the sight of a good deed, to blesse the doer thereof, though by Name unknowne unto us: And let us take heed that we doe not recant and recall our prayers, after that we come to the knowledge of his Name; as some doe, who when they see a laudable Work, willingly commend the doer of it; but after they come to know the Authors Name, (especially if they be prepossessed with a private spleene against him) they fall then to derogate and detract from the Action, quarrelling with it as done out of ostentation, or some other sinister end.

And she shewed her Mother in law with whom she had wrought.

Children when demanded, are truly to tell their Parents where they have been; rather let them hazard the wrath of their earthly

earthly Father, by telling the Truth, then adventure the diſpleaſure of their heavenly Father, by feigning a Lye. Yet as *David*, when *Achiſh* asked him, *where he had been?* (1 *Sam.* 27.10.) told him, that he had been *againſt the South of* Judah, *and againſt the South of the* Jerahmeelites, *and againſt the South of the* Kenites; when indeed he had been the cleane contrarie way, *invading the* Geſhurites, *and* Gezrites, *and the* Amalekites: So many Children flap their Parents in the mouth with a Lye, that they have been in their Studie, in their Calling, in good Companie, or in lawfull Recreations, when the truth is, they have been in ſome Drinking-School, Taverne, or Ale-houſe, miſ-ſpending of their precious time. And many ſerve their Maſters as *Gehezi* did the Prophet; who being demanded, anſwered, *Thy ſervant went no whither*, when he had been taking a Bribe of *Naaman*.

The mans Name with whom I wrought to day, is Boaz.

We ought to know the Names of ſuch who

who are our Benefactors. Thoſe are counted to be but baſely borne, who cannot tell the Names of their Parents; and ſurely, thoſe are but of a baſe nature, who doe not know the Names of their Patrons and Benefactors. Too blame therefore was that lame man cured by our Saviour, (*John* 5.13.) of whom it is ſaid, *And he that was healed knew not the Name of him that ſaid unto him, Take up thy Bed, and walke.* Yet let not this diſcourage the charitie of any Benefactors, becauſe thoſe that receive their courteſies, oftentimes doe not remember their Names; let this comfort them, though they are forgotten by the living, they are remembred in the Booke of Life. The *Athenians* out of Superſtition erected an Altar with this inſcription, *Unto the unknowne God:* but we out of true Devotion, muſt erect an Altar of Gratitude to the memorie, not of our once unknown, but now forgotten Benefactors, whoſe Names we have not been ſo carefull to preſerve, as *Ruth* was the Name of *Boaz*; *And the mans Name was* Boaz.

Verſ.

Verſ. 20.

And Naomi *ſaid unto her Daughter in law, Bleſſed be he of the Lord, for he ceaſeth not to do good to the living, and to the dead. Againe* Naomi *ſaid unto her, the man is neere unto us, and of our affinitie.*

THeſe words conſiſt of three Parts. 1. *Naomies* praying for *Boaz.* 2. Her praiſing of *Boaz.* 3. Her reference and relation unto *Boaz.* Of the firſt:

Bleſſed be he of the Lord.

The Lord is the Fountain from whom all bleſſedneſſe flowes. Indeed *Jacob* bleſſed his Sonnes, *Moſes* the twelve Tribes, the *Prieſts* in the *Law* the people; but theſe were but the inſtruments, God the principall; theſe the pipe, God the fountaine; theſe the Miniſters to pronounce it, God the Author who beſtowed it.

For

For he ceaſeth not.

Obſervation.

Naomi never before made any mention of *Boaz*, nor of his good deeds; but now being informed of his bountie to *Ruth*, it puts her in mind of his former courteſies. Learn from hence, new favours cauſe a freſh remembrance of former courteſies. Wherefore if men begin to be forgetfull of thoſe favours which formerly we have beſtowed upon them, let us floriſh and varniſh over our old courteſies with freſh colours of new kindneſſes, ſo ſhall we recall our paſt favours to their memories.

Uſe.

When we call to mind Gods ſtaying of his killing Angell, *Anno* 1625. let that mercy make us to be mindfull of a former; his ſafe bringing back of our (then Prince) now) King from *Spaine*; when the pledge of our enſuing happineſs was pawned

pawned in a forreine Country: let this bleſſing put us in mind of a former. The peaceable comming in of our Gracious Soveraigne of happie Memory, when the bounds of two Kingdoms were made the middle of a *Monarchy*: Stay not here, let thy thankfulneſſe travell further; call to minde the miraculous providence of God in defending this Land from Invaſion in 88. On ſtill; be thankfull for Gods goodneſſe in bringing Queene *Elizabeth* to the Crown, when our Kingdome was like the Woman in the Goſpell, *troubled with an iſſue of blood* (which glorious Martyrs ſhed) but ſtanched at her ariving at the *Scepter*: we might be infinite in proſecution of this point; let preſent favours of God renew the memories of old ones, as the preſent bounty of *Boaz* to *Ruth* made *Naomi* remember his former courteſies: *For he ceaſeth not to doe good to the living and the dead.*

He ceaſeth not.

Our deeds of Piety ought to be continued without interruption or ceaſing; ſome

ſome men there be, whoſe charitable deeds are as rare as an Eclipſe, or a Blazing-Starre; theſe men deſerve to be pardoned for their pious deeds, they are ſo ſeldome guiltie of them: With *Nabal*, they prove themſelves by exceſſive prodigalitie at one Feaſt; but he deſerves the commendation of a good houſe-keeper, who keepes a conſtant Table, who with *Boaz ceaſeth not to doe good.*

To the dead.

The meaning is, to thoſe who now are dead, but once were living; or to their Friends and Kindred. Whence we learne, Mercie done to the Kindred of the dead, is done to the dead themſelves. Art thou then a Widower, who deſireſt to doe mercie to thy dead Wife; or a Widow, to thy dead Husband; or a Child, to thy deceaſed Parent? I will tell thee how thou mayeſt expreſſe thy ſelfe courteous: Hath thy Wife, thy Husband, or thy Parent any Brother, or Kinſman, or Friends ſurviving, be courteous to them; and in ſo doing, thy favours ſhall redound to the dead:

Though

Though old *Barzillai* be uncapable of thy favours, let young *Kimham* taſte of thy kindneſſe: Though the dead cannot, need not have thy mercie, yet may they receive thy kindneſſe by a Proxie, by their Friends that ſtill are living.

Mercie then to the dead, makes nothing for the *Popiſh Purgatorie*; and yet no wonder if the *Papiſts* fight for it. 'Tis ſaid of *Sicily* and *Ægypt*, that they were anciently the Barnes and Granaries of the Citie of *Rome*: but now-adayes *Purgatorie* is the Barne of the *Romiſh* Court, yea, the Kitchin, Hall, Parlour, Larder, Cellar, Chamber, every Roome of *Rome*. *David* ſaid, 2 *Sam.* 1. 24. *Ye Daughters of* Iſrael, *weepe for* Saul, *which clothed you in ſkarlet with pleaſure, and hanged ornaments of Gold upon your apparell*: But ſhould *Purgatorie* once be removed, weep Pope, Cardinals, Abbots, Biſhops, Fryers; for that is gone which maintained your exceſſive pride. When *Adonijah* ſued for *Abiſhag* the *Shunamite*, *Solomon* ſaid to his Mother, *Aske for him the Kingdome alſo.* But if once the *Proteſtants* could wring from the *Papiſts* their *Purgatorie*,

nay, then would they ſay, Aske the Triple Crowne, Croſſe-Keyes, S. *Angelo*, *Peters* Patrimonie, and All: in a word, were *Purgatorie* taken away, the Pope himſelfe would be in *Purgatorie*, as not knowing which way to maintaine his expenſiveneſſe.

The man is neere unto us, and of our affinitie.

Naomi never before made any mention of *Boaz*; ſome, had they had ſo rich a Kinſman, all their diſcourſe ſhould have been a Survey and Inventorie of their Kinſmens goods, they would have made an occaſion at every turne to be talking of them. Well, though *Naomi* did not commonly brag of her Kinſman, yet when occaſion is offered, ſhe is bold to challenge her intereſt in him.

Obſervation.

Poore folks may with modeſtie claime their Kindred in their rich alliance: Let not therefore great Perſonages ſcorne

and

and contemne their poore Kindred. *Camden* reports of the Citizens of *Corke*, that all of them in ſome degrees are of kindred one to the other: but I thinke, that all wealthie men will hook in the Couſin, and draw in ſome alliance one to other; but as they will challenge Kindred (where there is none) in rich folkes, ſo they will denie Kindred where it is, in poore; yet is there no juſt reaſon they ſhould doe ſo: All mankind knit together in the ſame Father in the Creation, and at the Deluge; I know not who lay higher in *Adams* Loynes, or who tooke the Wall in *Eves* Belly. I ſpeake not this to pave the way to an *Anabaptiſticall* paritie, but onely to humble and abate the conceits of proud men, who look ſo ſcornfull and contemptuous over their poore Kindred.

Vſe.

Let ſuch as are allyed to rich Kindred, be heartily thankfull to God for them; yet ſo, as they under God depend principally on their owne labour, and not on their reference to their Friends; and let

them not too earneſtly expect helpe from their Kindred, for feare they miſcarry. A Scholler being maintained in the Univerſitie by his Uncle, who gave a Baſilisk for his Armes, and expected that he ſhould make him his Heire, wrote theſe Verſes over his Chimney;

Faller is aſpectu Baſiliſcum occidere, Plini,
Nam vitæ noſtræ ſpem Baſiliſcus alit.

Soone after it happened that his Uncle dyed, and gave him nothing at all; whereupon the Scholler wrote theſe Verſes under the former.

Certè aluit, ſed ſpe vanâ; ſpes vana venenum;
Ignoſcas Plini, verus es hiſtoricus.

So ſoone may mens expectations be fruſtrated, who depend on rich Kindred: Yea, I have ſeene the twine-thred of a Cordiall Friend hold, when the Cable-Rope of a rich Kinſman hath broken.

Let thoſe therefore be thankfull to God, to whom God hath given meanes to be maintained of themſelves, without dependance

dependance on their Kindred: better it is to be the weakeſt of Subſtances, to ſubſiſt of themſelves, then to be the braveſt Accidents, to be maintained by another.

Verſ. 21.

And Ruth *the* Moabiteſſe *ſaid, He ſaid unto me alſo, Thou ſhalt keep faſt by my young men, untill they have ended all my Harveſt.*

He ſaid unto me alſo.

RUth perceiving that *Naomi* kindly reſented *Boaz* his favour, and that the diſcourſe of his kindneſſe was acceptable unto her, proceeds in her relation.

Doctrine.

People love to enlarge ſuch diſcourſes, which they ſee to be welcome to their audience.

What maketh *Tale-bearers* ſo many,

and their *Tales* ſo long, but that ſuch perſons are ſenſible, that others are pleaſingly affected with their talke? Otherwiſe, a *frowning looke*, Prov. 25. 23. *will ſoone put ſuch to ſilence.* When *Herod* ſaw, *Acts* 12. 3. that the killing of *James* pleaſed the *Jewes*, he proceeded farther, to take *Peter* alſo. *Detractors* perceiving that killing of their *Neighbours Credits* is acceptable to others, are encouraged thereby to imbrew their *Tongues* in the murthering of more Reputations.

Secondly, Whereas *Ruth* candidly confeſſeth what favour ſhe found from *Boaz*, we learne, we ought not ſullenly to conceale the bountie of our *Benefactors*, but expreſſe it to their honour, as occaſion is offered. The *Giver* of *Almes* may not, but the *Receiver* of them may *blow a Trumpet.*

This confuteth the ingratitude of many in our Age; *clamorous* to beg, but *tongue-tyed* to confeſſe what is beſtowed upon them. What the *ſinne againſt the Holy-Ghoſt* is in *Divinitie*, that *Ingratitude* is in *Moralitie*; an Offence unpardonable. Pittie it is, but that *Moone* ſhould ever be

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in an *Eclipſe*, that will not confeſſe the beames thereof to be borrowed from the *Sunne*. He that hath a *Hand to take*, and no *Tongue to thanke*, deſerves neither *Hand* nor *Tongue*, but to be *lame* and *dumbe* hereafter.

Obſerve by the way, that *Ruth* expreſſeth what tends to the prayſe of *Boaz*, but conceales what *Boaz* ſaid in the prayſe of *her ſelfe*. He had commended her, *Verſe* 11. for a *dutifull Daughter in law*, and for leaving an *Idolatrous Land*. But *Ruth* is ſo farre from commending *her ſelfe* in a *direct Line*, that ſhe will not doe it by reflection, and at the *ſecond hand*, by reporting the commendations which others gave her.

Doctrine.

Let another prayſe thee, and not thine owne mouth.

How *large* are the *Pen-men* of the Scripture, in relating their owne faults: How *conciſe* (if at all) in penning their owne prayſes.

It is generally conceived, that the

Goſpel of S. *Marke* was indited by the Apoſtle *Peter*; and that from his mouth it was written by the hand of *John Marke*, whoſe Name now it beareth; if ſo,

Then we may obſerve, that *Peters denying of his Maſter*, with all the circumſtances thereof, his *Curſing* and *Swearing*, is more largely related in the Goſpel of S. *Marke*, then in any other: But as for his *Repentance*, it is ſet downe more ſhortly there, then in other Goſpels:

Mathew 26. 75. *And he went out and wept bitterly.*

Luke 22. 62. *And* Peter *went out and wept bitterly.*

But *Marke* 14. 72. it is onely ſaid, *When he thought thereon, he wept.*

So ſhort are Gods ſervants in giving an account of their owne Commendations, which they leave to be related by the mouthes of others.

Thou

Thou ſhalt keepe faſt by my young men.

Objection.

Here either *Ruths* memorie failed her, or elſe ſhe wilfully committed a foule miſtake. For *Boaz* never bad her to *keepe faſt by his young men*, but *Verſe* 8. *Abide here faſt by my Maidens.* It ſeemes ſhe had a better minde to Male-companie, who had altered the Gender, in the relating of his words.

Anſwer.

Condemne not the *Generation of the Righteous*, eſpecially on *doubtfull evidence*. *Boaz* gave a Command, *Verſe* 15. *to his young men* to permit her to *gleane*: ſhe mentioneth them therefore in whom the authoritie did reſide, who had a *Commiſſion* from their *Maſter*, to countenance and encourage her in her *extraordinarie gleaning*, which Priviledge her Maidens could not beſtow upon her.

Verſ.

Verſ. 22.

And Naomi *ſaid unto* Ruth *her Daughter in law, It is good, my Daughter, that thou goe out with his Maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.*

And Naomi *ſaid unto* Ruth, *her Daughter in law.*

Doctrine.

IT is the bounden dutie of Parents, to give the beſt counſell they can to their Children: As *Naomi* here preſcribes wholſome advice unto her Daughter in law.

It is good.

That is, it is better: it is uſuall both in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, to put the *Poſitive* for the *Comparative* in this kinde. Luke 10. 42. Mary *hath choſen that good part*, that is, the *better part. It is profita-*

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ble for thee that one of thy members periſh, and not thy whole body, Math. 5. 29. *Profitable,* that is, *more profitable:* and as it is expounded, Math. 18. 8. *Better. It is good for a man not to touch a woman;* 1 *Cor.* 7. 1. that is, *it is better;* it is more convenient, and freer from trouble, in time of perſecution. *It is good for thee, that thou goe out with his Maidens,* that is, *it is better.*

Doctrine.

Maids are the fitteſt companie for Maids; amongſt whom, a chaſt Widow, ſuch as Ruth *was, may well be recounted: Modeſtie* is the *Life-guard* of *Chaſtitie.*

That they meet thee not in any other field.

Here ſhe rendreth a Reaſon of her *Councell,* becauſe *Ruth* thereby ſhould eſcape ſuſpition, or appearance of evill.

Objection.

What hurt or harme had it been, if they had

had met her *in another field?* She might have been met there, and yet have departed thence as *pure* and *ſpotleſſe* as ſhe came thither.

Anſwer.

It is granted. Yet being a *ſingle woman*, ſlanderous Tongues and credulous Eares meeting together, had ſome colour to rayſe an ill Report on her Reputation. Beſides, being a *Moabite*, ſhe ought to be more cautious of her Credit; leſt, as ſhe was a *ſtranger*, ſhe might be taken for a *ſtrange woman*, in *Solomon his ſenſe*. And therefore *Nimia cautela non nocet*; in ſome eares it is not enough to be honeſt, but alſo to have *teſtes honeſtatis*; many a Credit having ſuffered, not for want of cleareneſſe, but clearing of it ſelfe, ſurprized on ſuch diſadvantages.

Verſ.

Verſ. 23.

So ſhe kept faſt by the Maidens of Boaz, *to gleane unto the end of Barley Harveſt and of Wheat Harveſt, and dwelt with her Mother in law.*

So ſhe kept faſt by the Maidens of Boaz.

HEre was good Counſell well given, becauſe thankfully accepted, and carefully practiſed.

Doctrine.

It is the dutie of Children to follow the advice of their Parents.

We meet with two Examples in wicked perſons, which in this reſpect may condemne many *undutifull Children* of our dayes. The one *Iſmael*; who, though he be charactered to be a wild man, *Gen.* 16. 12. *His hand againſt every man, and every*

every mans hand againſt him: yet it ſeemes his hand was never againſt his Mother *Hagar*, whom he obeyed in matters of moſt moment; in his Marriage, *Gen.* 21. *his Mother tooke him a Wife out of the Land of Ægypt.*

The ſecond is *Herodias*, of whom no good at all is recorded, ſave this alone, That ſhe would not beg a Boone of her Father *Herod*, untill firſt ſhe went in to her Mother *Herodias*, to know what ſhe ſhould aske. How many now-adayes make *Deeds of Gift* of themſelves, without the knowledge and conſent of their *Parents?*

Unto the end of Barley Harveſt.

Commendable is the conſtancie and the continuance of *Ruth* in labour. Many there are who at the firſt have a *ravenous appetite* to worke, but quickly they *ſurfet* thereof. *Ruth* gleanes one day, ſo as ſhe may gleane another; it is the conſtant pace that goeth fartheſt, and freeſt from being tyred: *Math.* 24. 13. *But he that ſhall endure unto the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.*

And

And dwelt with her Mother in law.

It was Chriſts counſell unto his Diſciples, *Math.* 10. 11. *to abide in the place wherein they did enter*, and not to goe from houſe to houſe. Such the ſetledneſſe of *Ruth*; where ſhe firſt faſtned, there ſhe fixed: *She dwelt with her Mother. Naomi* affords *Ruth* Houſe-roome, *Ruth* gaines *Naomi* Food; *Naomi* provides a Manſion, *Ruth* purveyes for Meat; and ſo mutually ſerve to ſupply the wants of each other.

If *Envie*, and *Covetonſneſſe*, and *Idleneſſes* were not the hinderances, how might one *Chriſtian* reciprocally be a helpe unto another? All have ſomething, none have all things; yet all might have all things in a comfortable and competent proportion, if ſeriouſly ſuting themſelves as *Ruth* and *Naomi* did, that what is defective in one, might be ſupplyed in the other.

FINIS.